

W. J. G.

Febry 1750

Given by him to his
dear Daughter Agnes

Nov. 22. 1750

For 20/10

Ann Gregory
her Book

July the 30-1750



*To: Sharp. Canon & Ecolatre
of S. Martin in Liege. Miss.
A. Prath. Apott. 1734 D.D*

W. J. G.

Febry 10

Given by him to his
dear Daughter Agnes

Nov. 22. 1750

Jan. 20. 1751

Ann Gregory
her Book

July the 30-1750

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A B R E E F F E
METHODE

O R W A Y *John Hargrave*

Teachinge all sortes of Christian
people, how to serue God in a
most perfect manner.

*Written first in Spanish, by a Reli-
gious man, named Alphonso.*

And reduced out of Latin into English
in manner of a Dialogue, for the ea-
sier vnderstanding and capacities of
the simpler sorte.

By I. M.

A T S. O M E R S
For IOHN HEIGHAM

RB. 8 / 29

Pa 496 B  L

3
TO THE RIGHT WOOR-
shipfull, and vertuous Ca-
tholicke Lady the
Lady M. C.

Albeit mankinde, by the stinge
of originall sinne, be deadlye
wounded in body and soule, as spoy-
led of immortalitie & all diuine gra-
ces, broughte into a wofull state of
all miseries, and naturallie inclined
to doe euill, to the greater encrease
of his owne damnation: yet the gra-
ce and mercy of God, hath not alto-
gether abandoned nor forsaken vs,
but (without any our good desert)
hath lefte vs in this exile and vale

of woes, diuers helpes, remedies and meanes, whereby We may attaine to his gracious fauoure againe, and (after this transitorie life, be aduaunced to high glorie, and the eternall ioyes in beauen. These meanes are his holy graces and vertues, by which We may be moued and made able to serue him, and to conforme our selues to his Will in all thinges. Our perfect sanctity and friendship with God standeth in this pointe, that We be of the same spirit with him, in euery thing We doe. And though he be a most gracious and bountifull Lord, and exceedingly desirous of our eternal happy estate: and hath moreover abundantly provided whatso-
euer

Dedatory.

5

euver may be necessary or conuenient
for our welfare: yea and through the
excesse of his diuine loue, hath lefte
nothing vndone that might helpe or
doe vs good: yet hath he lefte it in our
owne choice, and free libertie, Whe-
ther we will accept and vse his gra-
ces, endeuour to gett perfect holines,
and serue him as he desireth for our
good, or noe. Great ruine and des-
truction of all good, is made in our
soules by sinne, but it is in our owne
power to repayre againe this losse
and calamitie, and to obtaine per-
fect holines, which we may doe, if
(cooperatinge with Gods grace) we
suffer our selues to be moued in all
our actions onely by Gods holy spi-

rit. and Will, as S. Paule saith his children to be.

To instruct this, many deuout bookes and Treatises haue bene written by learned and holy men in all ages, teaching what we ought to doe, discoursing at large of the natures of all vertues and vices, and yelding sufficient matter for all sorts of holy Meditations, touching the maiestie, goodnes, and other perfectiōs of God: Touching heauen, hell, Iudgment, death, sinne, vertue, and the rest: perswadinge to good life and terrifyinge from euill: All commodious woorkes and commendable trauels of good men. But amonge them all, I neuer founde hitherto any compara-
ble

Dedicatory.

7

ble to a litle booke, diuulged by a religious man named Alphonso, in the Spanish tonge. In Which goulden Treatise, he geueth vs an exacte and perfect way, how we may repaire againe the ruine and wofull state of our soules, by sinne: and by rightly seruinge God, attaine to the perfection of true holines and loue of him. This Author leaueth the large and goodly discourses of vertues and vices, their reasons, examples, perswasions, and all points of Meditations (as all beinge sufficientlie taught and handled, by others innumerable, and to be founde euery where) and breesely touchinge the end for which God created and placed vs on earthe,

A 4

What

What bonde and dutie we haue of
seruinge him: What abiectiō and
miserie our soules and bodies are
brought vnto by sinne: He sheweth
a breefe, yet a most exacte way and
manner, how by the instrumentes and
powers of our soule, namely our vn-
derstandinge, and free will, holpen by
godds grace, we may put in practise
and execution, to his most holy ho-
nour, and our owne greatest profit,
Whatsoeuer is taught and conteyned
in other booke, how we may re-
paire our state againe, caste off all
wicked customes, expell all vitious
habitts, enriche and bedtisy our sel-
ues with all vertues, make all our
woorkes most precious, acceptable,
and

Dedicatory.

9

and meritorious, in Gods sight, become holy, chaunge our selues out of poore, naked, and abiect persons, into most glorious and diuine creatures: And finally be vnited to God in most perfect manner offrendshipp and loue.

This precious Iewel, I sende you, as a token of my good affection, towards your spirituall welfare, which I haue translated out of Latin, not holding woord for woord, but (cullinge out the principall pointes and pithe of euery Chapter) haue reduced it into the forme of a Dialogue, thereby makinge it more easie and plaine, for the capacities of the simpler sort, whom also I wish, may take commodity

modity thereof, as I assure my selfe,
your La. and euery one may doe, that
reade and diligently practise, What
is taught therein: Without Which
practise, all knowledge is vnpromita-
ble and vaine. It is not written for
vicious persons, suche as delight to
liue and wallow in sinne, without
regarde of God or their owne soules
health, for these will take noe bene-
fite hereof, but the Author hath pre-
pared and directed this woorke, for
the great good of vertuous soules,
who are resolved to serue God: and
standing in battell against the world,
the flesh and the deuill, haue a sin-
cere desire, to liue well, and woorke
their owne saluation. This good ene-

Dedicatory.

II

one that readeth it, may reape:
at knowinge thereby their owne
more and imperfect state, and be-
holding how farr off they are from
that degree of perfection they should
and might arrive vnto, they may a-
use them selues in their owne con-
dite, carry an humble minde before
heauen and earth, of their owne im-
perfections and vnworthines, which
is a good stepp to further vertue, and
be moued now and then, to worke
some particuler acts after the man-
ner hereof, which assuredlie will be
most pleasant to God, and most meri-
torious to their owne soules aboue all
other woorkes they shall doe.

Now in your afflicted state wher-

is

in you are tossed too and froe daungerously, by the enemies of Gods holie church, for your constancy in the Catholicke Faith: Alphonso Will teach you how to fraught your shipp, With all sortes of vertues, more precious then the Indian treasures, that you may come well loaden to the porte, When our Lord shall end your voyage.

How also to endure patiently, the raging and furious stormes of Godds enemies: And how finally to keepe a low sale, and an humble conceite of your selfe in all the good you doe, and to refer all the honour and praise thereof vnto God the owner and geuer of all good giftes. For it is a
most

Dedicatory.

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st certaine way to losse and shipp-
acke of all, to impute any good
your selfe, or to carry a high con-
of your owne well doinge.

Many vertuously disposed soules,
delight greatly in varietie & chaun-
of their spirituall exercises, and
embrace with great affection euery
noueltie, seekinge to know many
wayes to serue God: and euer thinke
that to be preferred as the best, which
is straunge and vnknowne to them,
or that which they thoroughly know
and haue vsed, they either loath or
little esteeme, such is the inconstancie
of our nature. But this new-fangled
mutabilitie, exceedingly hindreth
all spirituall good, and the progresse
in

in all vertue. And without comparison better it were diligently to keepe and practise one (though it be a meanner) then to be either negligent in the best, or to be alwayes inconstantlie flitting from one to an other: for so should a mā neither goe forward, nor grow perfect in any.

Be familiar therefore and stay your selfe with Alphonso (good Madame) for so shall you profitt greatly. And beware you be not content with the vertue you haue alreadye gotten: For our Lord and God was made man, and vouchsafed to die, for to aduance vs to a higher and perfect state of holines in this life: For this same ende also he would
that

Dedicatory.

15

ari- at Angells shoulde minister vnto
eepe e And finallie for the same ende, be
nea- th giuen vs the vse of heauen and
e in th With all his creatures in them.
ant- remember me I beseeche you in your
for uotions . And thus I commit you
ard, God.

Your seruant in our
Lord.

I. M.

THE

THE PREFACE OF THE

Author Alphonso.

Sainct Ambrose saith, that ignorance of the order & manner how to worke, greatly troubleth the qualitie of our meritt. Neither is it to be thought (as the same Author affirmeth) that we haue full knowledge of a thinge which we know we ought to doe, vnlesse we know wihall the order of proceedinge in the same.

Whereupon it is manifest, that it profiteth very litle, if one know what is written for seruing God,
and

and be ignorant in what manner
and order it is to be done. And
albeit art and knowledge of eu-
ery good thing, floweth from
God the supreamest artificer,
and many be illuminated by his
goodnes, and preuented with
benedictiōs of delight & sweet-
nes: yet for all that we must not
omit to doe what is in vs, to
seeke (as we are bound) his com-
maundementes and will, and o-
ther thinges which be necessary
for doinge perfectly whatsoeuer
is pleasinge vnto him. For which
purpose the breefe forme & Me-
thode which here we set downe,
will be profitable, that we may
know

know and woorke those greate
thinges, which the holy scriptu-
res teach vs. The which to doe,
it is noe lesse needfull that some
art be sought out, then for doing
any other thinge which we co-
uert rightly to know or worke.
To finde out this arte, the holie
Doctours haue spent much time,
and haue leste it writen at large
in diuers volumes: of all which,
we will gather a breefe conclu-
sion or summe. But this short
worke beinge cheifly ordeyned
for the exercises of the soule: it
will seeme sometimes verie ob-
scure to thē which haue not ben
exercised in the knowledge and
ope-

operations of the powers of their
boule. Yet we shall shewe after a
while in the prosecution of the
booke, this Methode to be so far
from obscuritie, that it bringeth
great lighte to all other bookes
of like argument.

Neither lett any thinke it su-
perfluous or vaine, that we geue
Documentes whereby we may
be holpen to serue God, when as
all the scripture witnesseth such
to be necessary. And S. Paul saith.
1. Cor. 3. that we are helpers or
coadiutors of God: but he either
helpeth not rightly, or not suffi-
ciently, that helpeth not as much
as he can and oughte. Neither is

it any other thing in vs that we helpe God, then that we moue our soule in all our workes, accordinge to the prescripte rule of this present arte, as sacred diuinitie at large declareth.

The Philosopher in his Metaphisicks affirmeth, that mankind liueth by arte: in which place he seemeth by this propertie, to distinguish man from vnreasonable creatures, for that all these are moued onely by naturall instinct without art: but man is ruled by art and reason: Wherefore he may be said to serue God as it were only by naturall instinct, like to creatures voide of reason, that is,
moued

noued to serue him that way,
by which he feeleth greatest cō-
olation and sweetenes, without
regarding by his vnderstanding
and reason, whether there be a-
nie other manner, whereby he
may be able, to serue God more
excellently.

Moreover there is noe cause,
why any should alledge the vnc-
tion of the holy Ghost, to teach
vs in all things, and therefore any
arte or methode whereby we
may learne to serue God, is need-
les: which sayinge is true, pre-
supposing that we our selues also
be his coadiutors or helpers, en-
deuoringe to know and worke,

as we are taughte in the sacred scriptures, and in this arte which we are to geue. For the vnction of the holy Ghost, teacheth not thē that are vnwillinge to learne, nor them that are idle, or make resistance.

Furthermore lest the sweete yoke of our Lord seeme heauie to any, let vs consider that it is not a thinge to be marueled at, if some dayes are to be spent, for getting so high knowledge and wisdom, as is here conteyned, and taught in this arte. For if in learninge Grammer or Logicke (artes farr inferiour to this) one consume and spende 3. or 4. yeares,

res, yea all his life, if he will be
 perfecte in any of them: how
 much better is our life bestowed
 (yea if it be wholly spent ther-
 in) for the perfect learning of this
 arte, most high and diuine of all
 other artes, which our supream
 Maister Iesus Christe, came to
 teach vs, with his so great toile
 and paine?

Moreouer, he that beginneth
 to learne this arte, must consi-
 der, that it will happen to him,
 as it is wonte to happen to in-
 fantes, who hauinge perfect sou-
 les, yet want the vse of reason:
 and hauing in their bodies hands
 & feete, yet can not goe or work:

but when they once begin to waxe and to moue their limmes, they goe, yet with great difficultie, and with fallinge now and then: but growinge elder, and vsinge daily exercise, they goe so freeilie, that they can runne at their pleasures.

The same hapeneth in these exercises, whiles one desireth purelie to serue God after this methode: For albeit our soules be perfect and entiere, yet so mightly are we bound and oppressed, and without strength to mooue our selues in the perfecte way manifested in the holy ghospell, and declared in this
arte

P R E F A C E. 25

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te which we sett out, that
t the first, we can not walke
r goe at all, or if we be moued
r attempt this, it is with such
ifficultie, that our going is well
eare nothing. Yet notwithstan-
inge let vs manfullie endeouour
o doe what is here prescribed so
well as we can: for whiles we
hall scarce dare, to hope to gett
he perfection taught vs, we shall
y practise go, yea so rûne by the-
e high pathes, that it may be said
ruly, our motions to be rather
he motions of an Angell flying,
hen of a man walking on earth.

None ought to pretende any
excuse why he serueth not God
after

after the maner we haue here set
downe ; contentinge him selfe
with the litterall obseruation of
some religious rule, or the com-
maundements of God , as suffi-
cient to saluation . For as the A-
pottle saith, Goddes will is that
we be holy and perfect . Seinge
therefore riches already gotten,
doe not suffice nor contente the
louers of the world, but alwaies
they wishe and couet more, yea
often contrary to Goddes com-
maundement : neither in like
manner ought we to be contente
with these spirituall riches we
haue allreadie, but labour to in-
crease them dailie, and augment
the

the rewarde we expecte, seinge
God doth vehemētly desire that
we so do. But if our appetite co-
met not this, for the profit we
may gett thereby, at the least it
shoulde extende it selfe to desire
it, because we know it to be gods
will that we be magnified and
enriched in all things, as the chil-
dren of so eternall and glorious a
Father in heauen, who admoni-
sheth vs saying, *Be you holy, be-
cause I your Lorde God and Father
am holy.*

This booke may be intituled,
*The Way, Arte, or Methode, of faithfully
seruing God:* which may be deu-
ided into three partes. The first
con-

conteyneth certaine vniuersall documents, instructions, or rules, whereby we may be directed in all our actions. The second part conteyneth certaine particular exercises, in which the seruant of God must be exercised, that he may repaire the ruine and corruption which sinne hath brought into his soule.

The third part treateth of the loue of God, and those thinges which he commaundeth to be loued, in which loue consisteth the fulfilling of the Law, and of all our good. And let him marke that shall reade this, how much labour and diligence he bestoweth,

P R E F A C E.

29

th, that desireth to be conninge
and furnished in some prophane
arte, and how meete it is, that
more diligence be vsed in this af-
aire.

These considerations therfore
had, and chesely relying vpon the
assistance of our supreme maister
Iesus Christ, our eternall God
and Lord, we will begin the
foresaid arte and methode.

THE

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

*How the Pilgrime and the Ermit
mett, and of their confe-
rence.*

IN Mantua, there once dwel-
led a Knight called Probus,
who for his valour, wisedome,
and other vertues, was much re-
nowmed in his countrie, and of
all estates very dearely beloued.
He was of a most deuout and re-
ligious disposition, studyinge
more to serue and please the om-
nipotēt king of heauen, then the
worlde or any earthly Prince.

About

The Pilgrime and the Ermit. 31

About the solemne-feast of
after, he would goe on pilgri-
age, to visit *Ierusalem*, and other
euoute places of the holy lande.
And as he traueled through a de-
erte in *Siria*, he missed his way
and was benighted: And wan-
dering too and froe, he espied at
the laste, a candle shininge from
the side of a rock: thither he went
with all hast, and called of them
within. By and by there came
forth a fatherly ould man named
Alphonso, and asked who he was
that called so vntimelic at his
Cell? I am a pilgrime for the holy
lande laide *Probus*, and goinge a-
ray in this wildernes, I elpyed
by

by good happ your candle, and
am come to crane harbour with
you this night. All that come in
Gods name be welcome to me
said *Alphonso*. I thanke you good
Father, said *Probus*.

When they were come with
in the Cell and sett downe, each
behelde other verie earnestly
And *Probus* said, I meruell good
Father, how you can endure to
liue this austere life in your cour-
se attire of sackcloath, with stene-
der faire in this vncasie boale?
haue endured it, saide *Alphonso*,
these many yeares I thanke God,
and duringe this mortall life,
desire noe change. In what sorte

The Pilgrime and the Ermit. 33

and pray you saide *Probus*, haue you
with you your life in this solitary pla-
ce, and what busines haue you
had to keepe you here thus long?
This māner of life seemeth very
horrible to mānes nature. Mānes
nature indeede my sonne, said *Al-*
phonso, would not endure this, if
it were not drawen & fedd with
greater comfort an other way.

The onely busines wherein I
bestow my selfe in this place, is
continually to serue my Lord &
God: which trade of life, is to
me so sweete, pleasant, and pro-
fitable, that it ouercometh all the
horroure, paine, and other diffi-
culties, which the frailtie of my

nature findeth. What exceeding ioyes also I haue by the hope of mine eternall reward with God for seruing him as I doe (if by his grace I perseuer to the ende) my tonge can not expresse.

It seemeth, said *Probus*, your seruing of God is more then ordinary: For I serue him also as I thinke, yet haue I not any such ioy therein as you speake of. My diet is daintie, mine apparell rich, my house sumptuous, and yet with all these, I finde small pleasure or ease in seruing God.

These temporall commodities saide *Alphonso*, I want voluntarilie, because it best pleaseth my
Lord

The Pilgrime and the Ermit. 35

Lord that I so doe, and that I be
content with necessaries, with-
out encombringe my selfe with
such superfluous thinges as you
speake of, which if I had or desi-
red, would perhaps much hin-
der me in Godds seruice, and are
needlesse, to my life,
health, or good estate: But the
perfect seruice of God, which
bringeth to man true comforte
delight and benefitte in this life,
and a ioyfull hope of inestimable
reward in heauen, consisteth not
in the want or hauinge, of these
temporall commodities: For you
also in your welth and abundan-
ce (if you knew the way) might

perhaps serue God with as much pleasure and benefite, as I doe in this pouertie wherin you see me liue. For our Sauour said: *Blessed be the poore in spirit, because theirs is the kingdome of heauen.* Which happy blessing and pouertie, not onely they may enjoy that wante all earthly treasures and commodities: but also the greatest princes in the worlde, in the midst of their wealth and abundance.

If this be so, said *Probus*, I beseeche you teach me the way, for I confesse I know it not: and if I can learne this lesson, I thinke I haue great aduantage of you.

that

The Pilgrime and the Ermit. 37

uch that liue thus austerely in this de-
sert. Perhaps noe great aduaun-
meage said *Alphonso*, for it is no lesse
lesse gratefull & acceptable vnto God
and noe lesse meritorious to our
en selues, to forsake all temporall
commodities for his seruice, then
to possesse and vse them to the
same ende: yea the frailtie of man
and the corruption of our natu-
res considered, it is much lesse
and verill to want them, then to haue
them. For the more we encom-
ber and distract our small abili-
ties about earthly things, the lesse
if able are we to attende and whol-
lye yelde our selues to heavenly.
But I shall willinglye teach you
that among

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the

the best way of seruing God that
hitherto I haue known. Set aside
therfore all other thoughtes, and
marke well what I shal lay. When
you conceale me not, aske bold-
lye what my meaning is: For it
is lost time to vs both, if I pro-
ceede, and teach more then you
vnderstande. Good Father, said
Probus, seing you geue me leaue,
I will make bould to interrupt
you when either I conceale you
not, or doubt in any point. So
doe in Gods name said *Alphonso*.

First then I must lay you down
a few considerations and instruc-
tions, of great importance, and
which are the foundations and
ground-

The Pilgrims and the Ermit. 39

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groundworke whereon we must
stay and raise vp all the frame we
are to builde. And you must of-
ten and very carefullie call them
to minde, if you thinke to profite
in this way of seruing God. I shal
doe my best endeouour therein,
said *Probus*.

The first instruction, shewinge to
What ende God created man;
and placed him upon
earth.

THE II. CHAPTER.

THe first instruction said *Al-
phonso*, and the foundation
C 4 of

of all, often and seriously to be considered, is, that God (as the holy Scriptures & Fathers teach) created & sent vs into this world, not to enioy and rest in the transitory commodities and pleasures thereof: but that (taking of Gods creatures so much as may suffice our necessities) we occupy and bestow our selues and all the rest we haue, in seruing and honoring our Lord, who hath prepared for our reward, the blisse of heauen, wherein we shall possesse for euer, God him selfe, that is, an infinite good, and in him, all good thinges, more abundantly then we can imagine. To honour and
serue

be serue God therefore (my sonne)
the re we come into this worlde.
ch) All we doo besides this, is no-
ld, thing els but losse labour, vaine
un- and hurtfull trifling, dishonora-
res ble to the noble children of such
ds a father as God is. No doubt fa-
ice ther, said *Probus*, but we were
nd created to serue God as you say:
est But what kinde of seruice doth
ng God require of man, and is by
or man of bonde and dutie to be
n, performed.

The

The second instruction, of the man-
ners how to serue God, and
how man is bounde
vnto them?

THE III. CHAPTER.

T Here be two sortes of ser-
uinge God, said *Alphonso*,
and two waies in like manner
are we bound to serue him. The
first is in the obseruing of Gods
commaundementes, which we
are all bounde to keepe, vnder
paine of eternall damnation to
hell fire. The second is more per-
fect, and is this, that (forsakinge
all

all earthlie thinges, and withdrawinge our hartes from the loue thereof) we caste our affection wholly vpon our heauenlie Father which is an infinite goodnes, and in all thinges labour to be of the same spirit and wil with him, accordinge to the example which our Sauour the naturall Sōne of God left vs whiles he serued her on earth, not for any need of his own, but to instruct vs how we ought to serue our Lord. This way Christ taught the yong man which had kept the commaundements when he saied. *If thou wilt be perfect, geue all thou hast to the poore, & come and follow me.*

How

How are Christiās bound to this manner of seruice, said *Probus*?

Not vnder paine of eternall damnation said *Alphonso*, as in the first way, but by a Law of frendshipp with God, of equity and gratitude, wherein all the children of God that would not be reckned base-minded, vngrateful, and foolish, should most carefully keepe themselves, that they may appeare the worthy children of so gracious a Father. For to all it is giuen in cōmaundment, that we loue our Lord with all our soule, with all our hart, with all our mind, & with all our strength. And to all he said: *Be you perfect*

As your heavenly Father is.

As he deserueth much blame that going to some place for dispatch of some weightie and necessary affaires, and neglectinge and leauing the thing he went to doe, trifleth away his time in vile sportes and abiect things: so likewise is he much blame worthy, that being borne into this world to serue the high maiestie of God with all his powers and abilities (which seruice is most due vnto God, and most profitable to the seruant) yet omitteth it, because it is not commaunded him vnder paine of death, bestowinge him selfe in the meane season, in

a meaner and more abiect kinde
of seruice, mixed with muche
worldly vanitie, that most swift-
lie passeth away, and bringethe
with it much euill. And albeit
God hath left it in our free choi-
ce and curtesie, yet the bond of
frendshipp, equitie and gratitude,
requireth that we endeuoure to
serue him (to whom all honour
and seruice is most due) in the
best manner we are able. The
first way to serue God said *Probus*,
is plaine and manifest to all Chri-
stians, but the other appertey-
neth only to you Eremites, to re-
ligious persons, and Clargy men.
As the first, said *Alphonso*, is

com-

common to all Christians, and
taught euerie where: so there is
no Christian but he may be
taught, learne, and performe the
seconde. I can hardly thinke so,
said *Probus*, for we may not all
forsake the world and cast all our
partes vpon this perfect seruinge
of God you speake of. No person
said *Alphonso*, is made a Christiā,
before he first solemnely renoun-
ce the worlde, with all the pom-
pes and vanities therof, and yelde
him selfe to the obedience and
seruice of God. And therefore
the profession, not onely of Er-
mits, religious persons and Prie-
sts, but of all true Christians also,

is to forsake the world, and seru
their Lord with all they are and
haue. For as I said, God created
man for this end, and for all tem
poral and earthly things, no man
doth rightly vse the or can haue
them, but to his exceedinge har
me, vlesse he turne them whole
lie to the seruice, and honour of
his Lord, whose in truth they be
& not mannes but for a litle time
to vse as God hath ordeined and
commaunded: which seruice we
ought to yelde to God, not only
in keping his generall commaun
demets, but in the perfectest ma
ner, as Christ our Lord by his
own example hath taught vs al

And

And this seconde is that, which
now I purpose to teach you, that
s, how riche men, artificers, and
all sorts of people, may serue their
Lord and God most perfectlye.
This will be most comfortable
to vs of the worlde, said Probus,
but it seemeth a moſte difficult
thing to be done.

The third instruction of the wofull
ruine & destruction made in mans
soule and body by sinne, by reason
whereof, he findeth great difficul-
tie in seruing God.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

Y^e Ou must know moreouer,
said Alphonso, that if man
D had

had continued in the happy state wherein God created him at the first when he placed him in paradise, it had bene noe difficultie for him, to haue serued God in most perfect manner, and to haue wrought any good: for then by originall iustice, his sensualitye and inferior powers were kept in most seemely order and perfect obedience to his reason and will: and these againe were guided & assisted, by singular and abundant graces, easily to obey and serue God and woorke any good. But after once by the euill vse of his freewill, he sinned and transgressed the commaundement of his Lord

word: he with all his progeny
were spoiled of those gracious
ra-iftes, and cast out of that happy
state and place into the banish-
ment of this miserable worlde:
his appetites, his will, & whole
byoule, became so infirme and di-
eased, that (loathing the infinite
good for which he was created,
as a thinge wherein now he tooke
no delight or pleasant taste, and
&uerst from all good) he is euer
ance inclined to euill, and can de-
re or loue scarfly any other thin-
But es, but abiect, vicious, and hirt-
his all. By reason of that greeuous
ref-esse and wofull chaunge, man-
his ind euer since hath found much

difficultie in the seruice of God,
or doinge well.

Our concupiscence and inferior powers, being now for want of originall iustice, lett loose and sert at liberty, neuer cease mightily to repugne and disobey, the reasonable partes of our soule: yea and to draw them to any thinge they like, without regard what either reason or God commaundeth.

We haue still left vs said *Probus*, the powers of our reason and free will, and God geueth the assistance of his grace to all that call for it: by these then we may serue God in the best man-

ner he requireth, notwithstanding the corruption and repugnance of our inferiour powers. We may serue him so indeede, said *Alphonso*, but not with such facilitie, promptnes, and alacritie, as we might haue done in the state of our innocency. For not onely the inclinations and motions of our sensualitie, be verie disordered and contrary to our reason, yea exceedinglie importune and vehemente to drawe vs from good to euill: but our reason alio is much darkned, by that fall from originall iustice, and our will sore weakned & wounded, yea and of themselves quite

disabled either to resist the continuall assaults of our sensualitie and inferiour partes, or effectually to woorke any good. The grace of God indeede enableth vs to doe well, but yet (as it is ordinarily bestowed on men) it taketh not from them, nor quite ouercometh, the repugnancy and difficulties, which our corrupted natures haue in doing well. Can we not said *Probus*, ouercom this difficultie by any meanes? Yet in great part said *Alphonso*, by singular and extraordinary graces geuen by God, and by the good habits of vertues which we may plant in our soules, by diligent
exerc

exercise of our superiour powers, as I shall tell you hereafter. But now remember, that this great confusion and perturbation in our soules, our auersion from good, our inclination to euill, with difficulty of working well, came all from sinne: and yet the same bond of doinge well and seruing God, which we had before this destruction, is not taken away from vs. For though we can not doe our duties, but with much difficultie, yet doe them we may by the assistance of Gods grace, and by litle and litle, repaire againe the losse and wrack we haue gotten by sinne,

in our soule and appetites. How
may this reparation be made said
Probus, for I thinke the nearer
we bringe our soules and pow-
ers to their former state, the bet-
ter shall we be disposed, & with
more facilitie shall we be able
to do our duties in seruing God.
Yea moreouer said *Alphonso*, we
may profit so much herein, that
we may obteyne wel-neare the
same facility to worke with great
delight in this corruptible life,
which we shoulde haue had in
the state of innocency.

the fourth instructiō, by what powers of our soule, we may repara our ruine: and of the way how to vse our vnderstanding and Will.

THE V. CHAPTER.

IN what manner said Probus, is this reparation to be made? It can not be made otherwise, said Alphonso, but by the powers and abilities of our soule holpen and assisted with the grâce of God. Wherefore you must vnderstand, that as man is made, and consisteth of a body and soule: so hath he

faculties
he ~~infirmities~~ in them both to
woorke with, as the body hath
feete to goe, handes to labour,
tongue to speake, and the like. In
the soule, there is the vnderstand-
ing and will, with diuers other
sensuall powers. The corporall
instruments and their actions of
themselves, are of small worth
and litle profitable, as S. Paule
saide to Timothy. But the vnder-
standinge and the will, may of
their owne natures, be of excel-
lent dignitie and profit, as if we
occupy them to know God and
loue him, or to consider any good
thing, and to desire it, or to know
what is euill, and to hate and
shunne

unne it : which operations of
these two powers , are greatly
commodious, though the body
rest al the while and do nothing.
For by the exercise of such actions
about any particuler vertue , we
should produce and bringeforth
good habits in our soule and de-
stroy the euill , which is a com-
mendable thinge , though it be
done but onely for the loue of
vertue , as the heathen Philoso-
phers did : much more when a
Christian doth it hauinge faith:
but moſte of all if such a man doe
it with actuall intention, for the
loue, honour, and seruice of God,
as I shall declare anon.

These

These two instruments therefore, the vnderstanding and the will, and their operations, are the meanes (Gods grace euer concurring with vs) wherewith we may perfectly serue God & worke the reparation of our soule.

They be indeede said Probus the cheifest & most noble powers, that man hath, and therefore fittest for such an ende: but in what sort shoulde we vse them rightly? Our sensual appetite said Alphonso, naturally desireth the thing which it is inclined vnto, that is, whatsoeuer seemeth vnto it pleasant, delectable, and sweete for the present, to these naturally

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is carried without further res-
te : And in like sort it flyeth
thatsoever seemeth harde, shar-
, and vnpleasant.

But our will is not moued in
is sort, for before it desire or
unne any thinge, it consuleth
with the vnderstanding, whether
e thing be conueniēt or not, &
ording as the vnderstanding
dgeth, so the will freely desi-
eth or refuseth it: So that the vn-
erstanding, is as it were, a light
nd guide to the will, shewing
e truth of euery thing as it con-
eiueth it; and directing the will
ow to worke.

Wherefore aboue all other
things

things we must be carefull, that our vnderstandinge doe not erre, or be deceiued in any thinge we go about to desire or shunne. For if it be blinded by ignorance, passion, or malice: it can neuer iudge rightly, nor consequentye the action of the will euer be good. But againe, though the vnderstandinge be without error, and re iudge truly what the thing is, or shew rightly what is to be done in any occasion: yet so maruelous is the power of mans will, that it standeth in free libertie, to followe and woorke as the reason iudgeth, or to refuse. Onely it is of all other powers and abilities

in

the man, hath freedome and per-
fect libertie. It is subiect to none,
e wold commaundeth all the rest:
For as and in a maruelous sort the
passiue power can predominate
iudger it selfe, both freely comma-
nd and enforce it selfe to obey:
so that hereupon cometh all our
doubt, if either the vnderstanding
and re, or (it iudging rightlie) the
will by reason of her libertie, wil
not worke accordingly. In this
sort therefore we must proceede
that with these two powers for the
reparation of our soules.
And first for the vnderstanding,
y is in euery thing which either by
ties our natural reason, or by the light
in of

of our faith, we know to be
good, or disposing or furthering
vs to vertue, and neuertheless
we finde great difficultie, hor-
rour, and auersion in our selues
to doe or desire it as were for our
good: we must presently vse the
power of our vnderstanding, and
with it, consider and apprehend
those same things (which seeme
so sharpe and greiuous to our
natures) as things most precious
and to God also most acceptable
and which may further vs also
to eternall life and ioyes: And af-
ter once we haue considered and
knowne them to be such, the
which had auersion and horrou

o b f them before, may now be
erincouraged to loue, desire, and
elef embrace them, and to worke
ho them in effect.

elue When they are thus conside-
r ou ed and knowne to be such said
e th robus, yet is the will free to
, an choose, to do them or not. You
end ay truly, said Alphonso, the
em will euer remaineth free, and
ou hath perfect dominion and li-
ous bertie to doe, or not to doe:
able out yet often it is terrified with
also he difficultie and sharpnes of
d af the thinge which is offered to
land t, and thereupon ceaseth to
wi worke, and so sinneth or omit-
rou teth the good that it might

E

haue

haue done. But if we endeavour
by our vnderstandinge to pre-
pare the way in manner aboue-
said, it will take such courage
vpon the knowledge of the ex-
cellencie of that woorke, that
(be it neuer so painefull) it will
loue and desire it, and doe it
also with as much facilitie and
delight wel nere, as any other
thinge which it coueteth natu-
rally. Marke this pointe well
my sonne, for I assure you, that
he which would worke and vse
his vnderstanding in this man-
ner, should easely and in short
time, come to great perfection
of vertue, and woorke with
much

much delight and comfort. I
thinke it well said Probus; But
say I intreate you, to deliuer
me this by some example?

With good wil said Alphon-
so: but it will fall more conue-
nientlye, after I haue shewed
you how also you must vse your
will, for this is the cheifest
point of all. Then proceede I
pray you, said Probus.

The vse of the Will.

Supposinge said Alphonso,
Gods holy grace euer to as-
sist and concurr with our free
will (for otherwise we were not

able to thinke any good expedient for our saluation, much lesse to desire and woorke the same) you must know that it is in our owne power to desire or leaue to desire, any thing iudged good or euill by our vnderstanding, and the same we may doe for this or that end, and as often euery day as we will.

Now to make the will desire to doe a good thing which naturally it doth abhorre, by reason perhaps it is painefull, hard, or vnpleasant, we must (as I said before) consider and apprehende the same thing,

most precious and gratefull
God, and commodious to
our selues: and then incline
our will (enforcing it after a
sorte) to desire and couet that
thing, as a sick man desireth
bitter potion, because he ap-
prehendeth it as holefome, the
which naturally he doth loath
and abhorr. In like manner
so is produced the acte of re-
sisting or not desiring the euill,
which we naturallie couet or
are inclined vnto; that consi-
deringe it to be vngratefull to
God, euill and hurtfull to our
selues, we incline our will, and
it were violently enforce it,

not to desire that thing. For example, to couet to be despised, contemned, or little esteemed among men, is a thing horrible, vnpleasant, and difficult to our nature: And in like manner to forsake all sensual delights and pleasures.

Now he that would haue an acte of desiring such cōtemp and wantes of pleasures; must first consider and apprehend them, as most excellent and worthy things, most gratefull to God, and greatly meritorious to himselfe, and then compell as it were and enforce his will, to accept and desire them.

them. In like sorte also to be
honored, highly esteemed, and
beloued of all men, to haue
sensuall pleasures, and other
things delightfull, sweete, and
pleasant to our nature: he that
would make an acte of refus-
ing and hating them, must
consider and iudge them with
his vnderstanding, as thinges
of base valew, displeasing and
vngratefull to God, and hurt-
full to himself. And then vpon
this true conceipt of these har-
mes in them, cease to desire
them, and make an act of ha-
tred or contempt of them, as
the sicke person doth abhor &

refuse a most sweete potion of
other meate pleasing his appe-
tite, because he knoweth it to
be hurtfull vnto him, though
otherwise he had a vehement
naturall desire and inclination
to the same.

In vsing our vnderstanding
& will in this maner, said Pro-
bus, shal we feele no repugnāce
in our sensualitie? Yea said Al-
phonso & that oftē very great
but this notwithstanding, our
acte is a true desire or refusal
of our wil: As we behould in the
licke man, that wil not eate the
meate to which he hath a great
affection and appetite, because

is vnholesome for him, and
that same wil of his not to eate
it, is profitable vnto him;
though his inordinat appetite
be not taken away. But by of-
fition working with the will in
that sorte, the repugnance and
all difficulties, will be lested
Principally by the good habits we
haue by our particuler actions.
And albeit wee seeme litle to
eat or profit or goe forward, and to
find small pleasure in working
thus, by reason of the contrary
the vicious habits, inclinations, &
the customes in our soule, which
make our actions seeme weake
and cold: yet must we not cease
to

to doe them, for by practife
exercise, we gett dailie mo
strength and readines, and
goe forward with great meri

Is this all, said Probus, I
to learne, about the vse
these two powers?

This which I haue tould
you said Alphonso, is the wa
to vse them: but one thing
more I must tell you, which
all that would perfectly and as
suredly repaire their soules
must with great diligence, car
rie in minde and practife: for
it is as it were the key of al our
reparation. What is this I pray
you, said Probus? My sonne

said

aid Alphonso, it is that besides the continuall studie and are we ought to haue of exercisinge the will, in desiringe the good thinges we shoulde desire, and omittinge the desire of euill thinges, thereby to destroy euill habits in our soule, and plante good, that besides this I say, we be diligent by the vse of our will, to repressse & resist the first thoughtes, motions, and appetites, which often assaile euen vertuous persons, and which may be cōsented vnto without mortall sinne. As for example, to be delighted that our deedes
or

or wordes, be well esteemed
or to be sorowfull and displea-
sed for iniuries, and auersion
of other persons from vs, and
such like: In all which, though
it be not a mortall sinne, that
we be occupied or consent to
them, yet few know what great
losse and harme they bringe to
vs, for by them our soule is
made dull and heauy towards
good things it should doe. He
therefore that desireth to be
Lord ouer his owne actions, &
be able with facility to worke
well, ought presently with his
will, to resist these first motions
or suggestions: That where he

was

as assayled with a motion of
reife for such iniuries and a-
version, or such like, he pre-
sently oppose himselfe and re-
sist such sorow and grief, with
an actuall desire of iniuries,
exactions, contempt, & con-
tradiction. And contrari-wise
in the motions of honour, cre-
dit, fauour, & all other sweete,
and delectable thinges, wher-
vpon presently ariseth in vs a
complacency and delight, we
& must be ready by and by, to
worke with our will an acte of
not desiring or delighting in
such things as naturally we are
inclined vnto and couet. For
by

by so doing, we shall not only escape vanitie and sinne, but by often practise, and vse, obtaine excellent habits, and expell the euill. Marke this well & it may suffice for this point and instruction.

I perceiue said Probus, those good habits would take away all, or most of our difficultie in workinge well: What way then may we gett them?

I shall teach you this also by and by said Alphonso: but first I must tell you, what intention and ende you must haue in the vse of your powers, and in all your actiōs, for without know-
ledge

age of this, all you can doe,
all be to smale purpose or cō-
oditie.

I pray you let me heare it the
id Probus.

*the fifth instruction, What ende,
scope, and intention, the ser-
uant of God shoulde
haue in all his
actions.*

THE VI. CHAPTER.

You must know therefore
said Alphonso, that in all
things which we desire or doe,
the ende, intention, and mo-
tive,

true, why we doe it, makes
the acte good or euill, precious
in Gods sight & meritorious
or vile and sinfull: In so much
as a good worke done for an
euill ende, is euill, though o
therwise of its owne nature, i
were good.

Doth a good ende in like
manner, said Probus, make an
euill worke good?

Not so said Alphonso, for a
good worke must be euery
way void of euill, as well, in
its owne nature, as in the ende
for which it is done: So an euill
worke is made euill, either for
that it is euill of its owne na

ture

re; or done for some euill
nd. For which cause the Apo-
le said, that it was vnlawfull
o doe euill, for a good pur-
ose. Go forward. said Probus
or I vnderstand this.

Euery worke said Alphonso,
that is good of its own nature,
or that is indifferent, that is,
which being neither good nor
euill of it selfe, may yet be
made good by a good ende or
intention, or euill by an euill
ende, euery such worke I say,
may be done or desired for di-
uers good endes, as for the
loue of vertue, or for the bene-
fite of our selues or our neigh-
bours,

bours, or for the imitation of
our Sauour and his Sainctes
or finallie for the loue of God
and therby to serue, please, and
honour him.

Now as one ende is better
then an other: So consequent
lie, that worke is better, which
is done for a better ende, and
that the best, which is done
for the best ende. Wherefore be
cause God is an infinite good
nes, that worke is the best
which is wrought purely and
whollie for his sake, or to yelde
him honour or seruice, with
out respect of any other ende
The seruant of God then that

de

desireth in the best manner to
please and serue his Lord, must
doe all thinges both in body
and soule, for God, to please,
serue, obey, and honour him
whereby: That (forgeting as it
were the good and glory that
may come to our selues, by
doing any acte of vertue, and
mindfull onely of God which
desireth our well doing, & de-
lighteth in it, and is most wor-
thy to be serued and honored
by vs in euery thinge) we be
moued to worke only for plea-
sing and honoring him, and
for fulfilling his will: Like to
a man, that for recoueringe

his owne health, hath prepared a medecine, and before he take it, perceauinge his dear friend to be fallen sick, and to haue greater need of the same in this case (forgetinge as it were his owne infirmity, & the desire he had to that medicine and mindful only of his friend) he reioyceth to forgoe it himselfe, and to bestow it for relieuinge of his friendes necessitie: So should we, I say againe, serue God, and euer (forgetting our selues, and all other thinges) desire and woorke onely because it is Gods will we doe it, and because his maiesty requireth

quireth it at our handes. For
his end and motiue we should
ouer to loue God, desire ver-
ges, desire & pray for pardon
of our finnes, for graces, for
glory: For this ende we should
see sinne, feare hell, abhorre
damnation, and desire or re-
fuse whatsoeuer. It seemeth
harde & vnpleasant at the first;
but after a while, it wil be easy,
and delightfull. And such as
haue their wils enflamed with
affection & the loue of God,
at the first hearing of this way,
can worke thus without diffi-
culty, and in short time, come
to exceeding great perfection.

But how said Probus, shal beginners which haue but cold deuotion, and weake loue of God, come to get this motiue actually in all they doe?

They may gett it, said Alphonso, by the vse of their vnderstanding & will in this sort. Let them consider, apprehend and sett God as their cheifest frende and most worthy Lord on the one side, and themselves on the other. This done when their will is moued to conuict any vertue, or do any good worke: Let them consider for what ende they are moued, and they shall finde it vsually, e

the

ner for feare of punishment,
or for their owne benefite, or
for the loue of vertue, or desire
of heauenly blisse. None of
these motiues should suffice or
content the seruant of God,
though they be not euill: But
seinge his will is so free (Gods
helpe euer presupposed) that it
may refuse any one ende, and
choose an other, as I told you
before: and seinge also he be-
leeueth Gods will to be more
excellent and worthy, and that
it should moue him rather than
his owne, he must violently
enforce him selfe to omitt and
refuse to desire or wil any thing

after his wonted manner; and bring his wil to desire the same thing for a better end and motiue, that is, to desire to doe it, for fulfilling the blessed will of God and pleasing him, and for that he (worthy of all seruice, obedience, and honour) would haue him to doe it.

This loe, is the way to gett this diuine motiue in all our actions, which so incomparably excelleth the motiues of our owne naturall desires, and all other motiues (how good and vertuous soeuer they be) as noe tonge can expresse. For the perfection of all our holines &c

cha-

in charity, consisteth in this point,
that we conforme our selues in
all things to Gods wil, & be of
the same minde with him. For
which cause, and for that it is
Gods high pleasure and desire,
that vpon this motiue we serue
him, we shoulde endeouour to
haue it in all our workes, both
corporall and spirituall, both
great & small: yea in those also
which we are naturally to worke
according to Gods ordinance,
as to eate, sleepe, &c. For as we
can not leaue these vndone, so
in doing the for the loue of God,
they helpe vs much to the en-
&crease of our spiritual life: And
so

so the leaste worke that we doe
in Gods sight, as to eate, sleepe,
recreate, and the like, shall be
of more dignitie, then the great-
est worke which he doth that
hath not the same ende : as to
faste, to watch, to geue almes,
to afflict the bodie, and such
like, for the kingedome and
loyes of heauen, or any other
ende, be it neuer so good.

Thus may we exceedingly
enriche our selues euery day:
thus may we be made as it were
diuine, when we are moued in
all our actions, onely by the
spirit and will of God. And
therefore when we are about to
doe

doe any thinge, we should not
asse vnadvisedly frō on thing
to an other, nor euer begin any
thing, without casting of our
ies before vpon God: nor be
content and satisfied with this
neither, till we feeble our selues
to will and desire the worke for
pleasing God, who exceeding-
lie ioyeth and delighteth in
our well dooing: which once
perceiued and sensibly known,
let vs set vpon the worke we
are to doe, without thinkinge
vpon any good of our owne.
For it is fitt and due, that his
omnipotent and blessed will
that created all wills, haue such
preemi-

preeminence and dominion o
uer all wills, that not only they
obey him in all he hath com-
maūded them, but moreouer,
that they doe euery thing they
are to worke, for the fulfilling
his holy will, without any fur-
ther respect. At the beginning
it will seeme very difficult and
harde to worke vpon this mo-
tiue, and small deuotion or ioy
will appeare in this Exercise:
and the reason is, for that we
worke not now, nor loue not,
for any good of our owne, as
we were accustomed to doe, &
as it is naturall to vs, but wor-
king only for the loue of God,

as it were remoue away from
s, the roote from which all
oye and delight, was vsually
nd naturally wont to spring,
hat is, we leaue all respect of
ur owne proper good & rest,
nd take for the rest and ende
f all our labours, an vnusuall
r straunge good, that is, the
eruice, pleasure, glory, or loue
f God: which being a super-
aturall motiue and ende, and
straunge to vs at the first, no
maruel if this chaunge, bringe
nto vs great paine and trou-
le at the beginninge, but by
aily exercise, and frequent
ctions, we shall gett an habit
therof

therof and worke readily, with much delight and comfort.

I beleeeue it wel said Probus for all beginnings of good things, are euer difficult and vnpleasant : and diligent vnderstanding and practise, make promptnes

But I pray you Father, let me aske you two questions: first how shall I know and be assured, that it is Gods holy will and desire, that I worke in this manner, and serue him vpon this motiue, and for this end in all things?

This may you know, said Alphonso, both by your naturall reason, and the light of our

ur Catholick Faith. For God
created vs all to serue him, and
greatlye desireth, yea moſte
ſtriſtlye chargeth vs to loue
him, with all our hartes and a-
bilities. And becauſe his dread-
full Maieſty, is worthy of the
cheifeſt and beſt ſeruiſe and in
the beſt manner alſo that his
creatures can deuife to yealde
him, which is, to be moued in
our actions, and to doe all we
doe, for his loue, will, and ho-
nour, as himſelfe doth in all
his workes: it is manifeſt that
his will and deſire is, that we
imitate him, working and ſer-
uing him in all things, for the
ſame

same motiue and ende. For no
 thing can be more acceptable
 to his maiestie, then that we
 conforme our selues to him
 and doe all for his sake. What
 is your other question now said
 Alphonso?

Why then, said Probus,
 not this end and motiue (being
 the most perfect of all others)
 commaunded or taught vs
 the holie Scriptures, but for
 the most part, they threaten
 vs with punishment, or inuade
 vs with rewards of heauen? &

The Sõn of God our Sauour
 Iesus said Alphonso, as he
descended for our good, to take

pon him our infirmities, as to
be hungry, weary, to feare, to be
sorrowfull, and the like: So would
he also haue his euangelicall do-
ctrine written in such wordes, as
our base condition and frailtie
required:] which for the moſte
part is moued (now after the cor-
ruption of our natures by origi-
nal ſinne) either by hope of good
rewards, or for feare of puniſh-
ment. But withall we muſt con-
ſider, that as our redeemer tooke
vpon him thoſe infirmities of our
nature, with the cheefeſt perfec-
tion and charitie that might be,
to fulfillinge the will of his Fa-
ther, by doinge and ſufferinge all
G for

for his loue & glory: so he would haue his seruants to folow his example, and (that hearing Gods threatnes or promises) they be indeede moued with them, and doe their best to escape the one and gett the other: But all this not for the paines and punishment threatned, or the reward promised, but because they proceede by them, that it is Gods will and desire, they labour to escape paines and damnation; in which state they can neuer serue God more, nor doe his will, and to obtaine the reward of heauen where they shall be with God for euer, and haue noe will, but

to honour and praise him. So the
inner once brought to grace, fea-
reth Gods threatens, because his
will is that he feare them: He
doth penance, because it is Gods
will he doe it: He doth good
workes for heauen, because it is
Gods will he so doe: By reason
of which ende and motiue, in his
actions, they are of most high
perfection and merit. And so the
holy scriptures though they shew
that outwardly, which is agree-
able to our infirmitie, yet with-
all they conteyne inwardly, their
highest perfection in this point,
as is manifest in the commaun-
ement geuen, that we loue our

G 2

Lord

Lord with all our hartes and
strength in all thinges. *Mat. 12.*
which is perfectly kept, whē we
desire Gods will to be fulfilled.
But because our natures are much
inclined to euill; and by reason
of our vitious habits and euill
customes, we waxe soone weary
of well doinge, I must teach you
how to extirpate such euill ha-
bits out of your soule, and to en-
graft good: For vnlesse you learne
this, all we haue said hitherto is
to litle purpose, and you shall
neuer worke with alacritie of
minde, nor proceede with pro-
fitt. Doe so I pray you, said Pro-
bus, for in all your speech hitherto

So, I haue perceiued that good ha-
bits would take away either all,
or the moſte part of difficulties,
which are to be found in ſeruing
God this perfect way which you
haue taught me. They doe ſo,
ſaid Alphonſo, and more ouer,
the whole reparatiō of our ſoule,
conſiſteth in them, as the wrack
and deſtruction of all our good,
by the euill habits.

*the ſixte inſtruction. How to plant
good habits in our ſoule, and
extirpate the euill.*

THE VII. CHAPTER.

YOU muſt know therefore ſaid
Alphonſo, that as theſe ha-
bits

bits be in our soules: so the actions wherby they are gotten & made, are wrought principally by the powers or instruments of the soule. And vnlesse we diligently vse and exercise these instruments, especially our vnderstanding and will, we shall neuer get the habits of any vertues. As for example, if a man be impatient or testie, and woulde haue this vice amended in him selfe and obtaine the habit of patience, this man how much soeuer he be wronged with iniurious wordes or deedes: how much soeuer he desire the habit of patience, yea how much soeuer he refrain

refraine from wordes or deedes
of reuenge, yet shal he neuer pro-
duce or bringe forth in his soule,
the habit of patience, except he
helpe himselfe by often mouinge
his vnderstandinge, to consider
the great good of patience, and
by stirring his will, as the neces-
sary instrument to bringe forth
his habit by inclining it (as I said
before) to desire to suffer iniu-
ries & persecutions for the loue,
pleasure, and glorie of his Lord,
that exhorteth vs all to it, & hath
offered the like for vs.

Liuing among good and ciuill
people said Probus, & Christians
specially that haue the feare of

God, we shal very seldome, haue any such occasions of impatiencie offered vs by iniurious words or deedes, and so shall we haue small exercise, and consequently, be long in gettinge the habit of patience, or neuer get it at all. In like sort also may we say, of the habits of other vertues.

Not so, saide Alphonso, for where or with whom soeuer we liue, we may worke, and exercise our selues at all times, to get any vertuous habit, and geue it in deede. How may this be said Probus.

At all times saide Alphonso you may produce it thus. For

exam

example, the habit of patience.
cease at any time, your cogita-
on vpon some iniury that you
much abhorre, and thinke what
you would doe if it were offered
done to you: Presently you
shall perceiue, a great repugnan-
ce and horroure of that iniury a-
rise in your minde, by reason of
the euill habit of impatience in
you. Forthwith therefore call to
mind the great good that follow-
eth, and how God is pleased in
the patient suffering of such iniu-
ries: and then enforce your will
to desire them. And cease not to
enforce your selfe to this though
it seeme but a constraint & com-
pulsion,

pulsion, for there is euer some part voluntary therin. And if you practise often these actions, that which seemed to be but a little voluntary, will increase, and you shall come to suffer iniuries and tribulations most willingly: and withall the habit of patience will be planted in your soule. In like manner may you at any time please and enriche your selfe with habits of Humilitie, of Pouertie, Temperance, Chastitie, and other vertues, euer considering the great good that is in the exercise of them, and compellinge your wil to desire them vpon this motive, because it is the desire, will

and glorie of God that you haue
them.

But yet you must vnderstand
gaine said Alphonso, that by this
pre-thought and acceptance or
desire of iniuries, which indeede
are not done vs, this habit of pa-
tience is not so quickely nor so
well gotten, as it is when some
iniurie or disgrace is actuallye
done, and this before others, if
when you compell your will to
accept it: Because the actions of
our will acceptinge such present
iniuries, are more vehement, and
more subdue the soule, then those
which are of accepting an iniurie
offered only by our thought, and
may

may happen, but doeth not. And by
a few vehement actions, working
more strongly and effectually than
the producing of an habit, than
many which are remisse and
weake.

This is the way, to roote out
euill habits, and to plant good.
For working of which effect, it
is moreouer greatly profitable, to
keepe alwayes a verie firme will
and purpose, in the desire & loue
of good, and in the hatred of euill,
to which ende serue greatly
the high consideratiōs & weigh-
tie reasons which many bookes
yelde, why good thinges & vertues
are to be loued, and vice re-

hated.

Now hereby you may percei-
ue, how the mightiest Princes of
the worlde, may enriche them-
selues with the habits of Patien-
ce, of Pouertie, Humilitie, Tem-
perance, and of all other vertues:
and bewtifie their Soules in Gods
sight, noe lesse then a religious
person, if they be willing and di-
ligent to doe as I haue tould you.
I perceiue it well said Probus,
but after we perceiue our selues
of to haue gotten these good habits,
may we not assure our selues to
be in good state and holy? Albeit
said Alphonso, a man haue got-
ten excellent habits of vertues,
yet

yet can he not be sure that he hath gotten the grace of God without which, a man can be in no good state with him, or in truth holie. Gods grace is geue[n] infallible vnto them that haue all which I haue tould you already, and which foloweth after, but naturally we can not know in this life, whether we haue these thinges as Gods will is w[isdom]e should, and consequently we can not be certaine, that we haue his fauour and grace. But a cheif signe that we haue it is, when in the same manner we behaue our selues towardes those vertues whereof we haue gotten habite

we doe towardes the vertues,
 other men, that is, if our har-
 s be not extolled or any whitte
 roudes for them, but praise and
 make God, whose is euery thing
 at good is: and ioy as much in
 ther menns vertues, as in our
 wne, because Gods honour and
 orie, are equally manifested in
 em both.

But my sonne said Alphonso,
 forget my felse, it is high time
 ow, you rest a litle, and make
 ollation.

1. By this which I haue hi-
 erto said, you may knowe in
 me parte: first, how God crea-
 d vs all to serue him, and to vse
all

all temporall thinges to his honour, and for releefe of our necessities.

2. Secondly, how there be two manners of seruing God, & that we are all bound to serue him in the perfectest sorte.

3. Thirdly how by sinne, we are fallen from Gods fauour, into a miserable state, both of body and soule, the bond of seruinge God still remaininge.

Fourthly how we may repair againe this calamitie and destruction in our soule, by the power thereof, working with Gods grace: and of the vse of our vnderstandinge and will, to the same

end

ho- end.

ne. 5. Fifthly to what end you are
to direct al your actions, though-
e be es, & desires, and how to doe it.

d, & 6. Sixtly, what way to ex-
him irpate euill and vicious habits,
which cause much harme in our
we soule, and how to plant the ha-
into bits of vertues.

body After we haue made collation,
inge shall instruct you, how to ex-
ercise your selfe in a few princi-
paired all thinges, which are necessary
instru for the reparation of our soule,
wen before you can be rightly dispo-
sgrated, to loue and serue God, in
nder such manner as he requireth.

fam
end

H

THE

IS THE SECOND PARTE.

The second parte, conteyning
certaine spirituall exercises
whereby the soule is adorned
beiwttified, and rightlie dispo
sed, to the perfect actes of lo
uing and seruing God.

The first Exercise, how the seruant
of God shoulde purge his soule
from all sinne.

After they had refreshed the
selues with bread and wa
ter, which was the Ermits vsual
fare, he beganne and saide. My
sonne

onne; the first thinge and Exer-
cise, wherein a man must occupy
him self, to get a fitte disposition,
to loue and serue God, is to ex-
tirpate or roote out of his soule,
alle euill, that is, the filth of sin-
ne: that when he would do any
seruice to his Lord, there be no-
thinge that may offend the eyes
of so high a Maiestie. This done,
he must adorne and bewtify his
soule with good habits and ver-
tues, whereby he may appeare
gratefull and acceptable to him
in his seruice. Of these two thin-
ges, I will therefore now speake:
and first how to roote out and
destroy sinne.

You must know then, that sinne is the most vile and detestable euill that can be deuised, and bringeth to any reasonable creature that committeth it, vnspokeable harmes and mischeues. For by sinne, we loose God, who is an infinite goodnes. By it we contemne, dishonour, and iniury our Lord, in the fowlest manner that may be. By it, we frustrate in our selues, the effecte & frute of Christs painfull life, and most bitter passion, and conculcate or treade vnder foote, his precious blood. By it we defile and make most lothsome and abhominable our owne soules, washed and sancti-

hath sanctified with the blood of our
sauiour, and chosen to be the sa-
cred temples of Gods Maiesty.
By it we pollute our harts, the
Altars & Tabernacles of the ho-
ly Ghost, where he delighteth
to dwell. By it we loole Gods fa-
uour, and all his graces, the eter-
nall ioyes of his kingdome, with
all our right and title thereunto.
By it only we are made the bond-
slaues of the deuill, the felowes
and companions of all wicked
men, both alieue and dead, and of
the damned spirits in hell. By it,
we are made the reprochfull ene-
mies of God, the most abiect, co-
ntemptible, and dishonorable of

all his creatures. And finally by it we purchase assuredlie to our selues, endles dampnation, eternall woes, and the horrible torments of hell-fire.

All which euills and miseries are iustly dwe to him, that by sinne committeth high treason against his supream Lord, who vouchsafed to die for him.

Now the sorowes and teares of all Gods creatures are not sufficiēt to destroy or take away one sinne: much lesse the penance and teares of one man that hath committed the same. But the mercy and clemency of our Lord is so great, that he will not haue vs to

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dispaire: & desirous of our weale,
hath prouided vs a remedie, and
is content to pardon and forgeue
our sinnes, as sone as we for our
parts, haue hartie sorow & con-
trition for the same: What be-
sides is needfull or requisite, he
supplieth it of his owne, & resto-
reth vs againe to his grace and
fauour. It is meete therefore that
we lament and sorow for our sin-
nes, consideringe we haue done
so many euills by them, both a-
gainst God and our selues.

How should we do this as be-
cometh vs, said Probus?

The way is this, said Alphonsus
to. With your vnderstandinge

present to your selues, the guilt
which come of sinne as before;
and then compell your wil (prin-
cipally for the offense and disho-
nour of God, and because it is his
will that you sorow for them) to
lament; and to desire that you
had not committed them, nor in-
jured Gods maiesty: which acte
of your will, you must often la-
bour to produce; now in generall
for all your finnes, now for one
particular sinne, now for an o-
ther, and this with the greatest
endeuour you can, to haue hartie
greife and contrition notwith-
standing you feele your self som-
times voide of sensible sorow, or
paine,

aine, for this is in Gods hande
 and not in your owne, to haue at
 your pleasure, but doubtlesse he
 will bestow it also on you, if you
 endeavour to get it as you may.

I vnderstand all this, said Pro-
 bus.

Then wil I passe said Alphon-
 so, to the second thing, which
 I tould you was requisite, for
 the expelling of our corruption
 and euill habits.

What is that said Probus?

THE

THE SECOND EXERCISE.

*Necessary for them that would
serue God, which is the hatred
of our selues.*

IT is the hatred of our selues,
said Alphonso: and this Exer-
cise amonge all other, is of grea-
test weight and importance, for
them that desire perfectly to loue
God and to serue him: For from
selfe loue, springe innumerable
euills, by which are engendred
vicious habits: and this selfe loue
ceasing at the entrāce of that ho-
lie hatred (which the holy scrip-
tures

Scriptures much exhort vs vnto
all sinne will be destroyed in vs,
with all other wicked habits.

How may we come to this
holy hatred of our selues, saide
Probus?

First said Alphonso, of al thin-
ges which may bring vs delecta-
tion and pleasure, as meate, sleep,
recreation, rest, apparell, and the
like, we must take or desire no
more, then that we can not omit
or leaue vntaken without offen-
ce of God, that is, onely neces-
saries. And necessities also must
we take, not for our owne con-
solation, or for satisfaction and
contentment of our owne appe-
tites.

tices and sensualitie, considering how vnworthy we be of all delectation, through the greuousnes of our sinnes, but onely for fulfilling Gods holy will, who hath ordeyned & appointed that we vse and take such thinges, to enable vs more in his seruice, for which cause we admit them willingly, for releefe of our necessities, otherwise we would not admit them at all. What in these necessities is sufficient, a mannes owne experience with a deuout mind, will tell him.

Secondly all thinges which be painfull and greuous, as labours, toyles, abiections, contempts, injuries,

uries, afflictions, and the like,
we must take vnto vs, and desire
or wil they be done to vs as much
as may be, without offence of
God, our owne, or our neigh-
bours harme.

Thirdlye, if we woulde serue
God, and hate our selues in most
commendable manner, we must
not onely refuse delectable thin-
ges, and desire painfull and gree-
uous, as I said, but moreouer we
must ioy and be glad, when any
aduersities or sharpe things hap-
pen vnto vs, and when we are
deprived of pleasant thinges, yea
of necessaries, and this cheiflye,
when they are done by some o-
thers

thers against our wille, or vpon
euill intention; which yet we
ought not to iudge without ma-
nifest signes, no nor then nethe-
with absolute & full determina-
tion, but pray for our persecu-
tors, and loue them with al our
hartes, because in truth they doe
vs much good: and otherwise we
should loose the inestimable re-
warde we are to receiue for suf-
fering patiently persecutions and
troubles.

All these three thinges neces-
sarie for the holy hatred of our
selues, the Sonne of God taught
vs, both by his word and by his
owne example, as S. Peter saith

Pet. 2. He suffered for vs, leaving vs an example to followe his steppes, whose most blessed soule was free from al spot of sinne, and therefore his holy body should not haue bene entreated sharply, or haue suffered any disgrace at all: Yet would he for our example (whom he most tenderly loued) refuse and set nothing by all delectable thinges, & consent that his body & soule should suffer exceedinge torments and griefes, as it is manifest in his holy ghospell. Wherefore much shame and reproch it is, to al that professe them selues to be Christians and scholars of Christ, not

to learne this holy hatred, neither
by his worde saying: *He that hat-
teth not him selfe, can not be my Dis-
ciple*: nor by his exāple, but stand
euer vnwillinge to suffer any paine
ne or iniurie for his seruice, or
to heare of it either.

I confesse, said Probus, it is a
great reproch and dishonour to
Christian in this lesson, to forsake
his sake and not to imitate his Lord
and God, considering he suffered
all for our sakes and instruction,
and the commodity of our labours,
being all our owne. But
what reasons besides this can we
consider, why we shoulde thus
hate our selues? For vnlesse our

willem

the willes be animated and encouraged by our vnderstanding in this point, cheifly, which (for the naturall loue we beare to our selues) seemeth terrible and horrible to be thought vpon, we shall neuer desire this hatred, much lesse exercise our selues to get it.

The doctrine and example of our Sauour laid Alphoso, should suffice, but I will geue you two or three reasons more. The first is, because whatsoever euill is in vs, with all our want of good & But vertues, all I say, cometh because we hate not our selues, but loue and desire thinges, either against the commaundement of God, or

contrary to his counsels and li-
uile.

Wherefore selfe loue being so
hurtfull to vs, and hatred of our
selues so commodious, we haue
good cause to desire and labour
for this later, and to flee that o-
ther.

An other reason may be, be-
cause by sinning, we haue bene
traitours against the maiestie of
God: Wherefore it is meete and
iust, that we yelde him all possi-
ble satisfaction. And feinge that
satisfaction should be answerable
in greatnes, to the greivous-
nes and malice of our finnes, and
we our selues can yelde but litle,
and

Hatred of our selues. 131

And also in that we can doe, are
uerie negligent and slacke, to vse
our owne bodies hardly any way
for making what satisfaction we
are able; at the least for this cause
we ought to hate our selues as is
declared, & to desire and beioy-
full, that euery one hate, perse-
cute, and afflict vs, as much as
they may without the offence of
God, that thus at the least we
may satisfie vnto him, conside-
ring I say, our owne abilities o-
therwise suffice not.

The third and most high rea-
son of all, why we shoulde hate
our selues is, that our soules
being voide and emptie of selfe
loue,

loue, as farr forth as may stande
with Gods pleasure, they may
be filled with God him selfe,
whose goodnes in no wile can
suffer, that being emptie of selfe
loue, we shoulde not be filled
with the loue of him, and conse-
quently his holy will, reigne and
beare all sway in ours. But of this
principall reason I shall tell you
more, when we come to speake
of the loue of God.

How shall we said Probus, vse
the instrumēt of our soule, to ob-
tein this holy hatred of our selues.

When we would said Alphonsus
so, refuse and not admit, thinges
delectable and pleasant, or desire
and

Of hatred of our selues. 133

and accept hard & painfull things, as contempts, reuylinges, iniuries, and the like, we must forget a litle these things, and not offer them thus nakedlie to our will, but turne our minde to consider the innumerable good things which come to vs, by refusing the one sort, and accepting the other: And principally the infinit treasure of Gods loue, which we get by hatred of our selues according to his will. And then vpon these considerations, moue and incline our will to reiecte the pleasant, and to embrace the grieuous, as necessarie meanes to obtaine these inestimable
1 3 goods,

goods, euer with-al being mindfull, that you doe all this, for the seruice of your Lord, and for fulfilling his holy will and pleasure.

But touchinge the ioyfull acceptance of painefull things and aduersities, I shall tell you more, in the matters of Humilitie and Patience.

There is no more then to be learned, said Probue, for the hatred of our selues.

Yes, one thinge more said Alphonso, which meruelously helpeth them that are desirous to obteine this holie hatred, which is, that continuallie and without ceasing, we persecute certaine innume-

numetable lide desires of our
 owne, which if we marke, come
 runninge vpon vs in euery mo-
 ment, and incline vs to self loue.
 Wherefore we must in all occa-
 sions, be watchfull ouer our own
 actions, and verie circumspectly
 marke, whether perhaps we de-
 sire any thinge, which is not be-
 longinge vnto God, or not fur-
 theringe vs towards him : and
 incontinent so soone as we espie
 any thinge to delight vs without
 God, we must incline our will,
 to contradict and refuse it. And
 when we perceiue any thing to
 happen greuous and displeasent,
 we must by and by, incline our

will to conent and accept it. If you be diligent in this, you shall both much sooner get this holy hatred, and withall such dominion & gouernement ouer your selfe, as can not be exprest in wordes. Marke therefore this well I say againe, and exercise it, for assuredly this point is the key & gate to cheife perfection.

This hatred said Probus, seemeth contrary to Charitie, whereby we are all bound to loue our selues.

Not so, said Alphonso, but so soone as a man hateth him selfe in this sort, and not before, he hath all the loue that he ought to haue

Of hatred of our felues.

haue towardes him selfe, and
which is most profitable & glo-
rious to him, & that which God
would he should haue. For then
hath he the loue of God, of ver-
tues, of eternall glory, and of all
things which helpe him thither,
which loue doth not suffer with
& at the company of any vice.

But now let vs goe to the se-
conde thinge, that is, to know
how we may adorne and bew-
tify our soules with vertues. As
it pleaseth you, said Probus.

THE

THE THIRD EXERCISE.

*How the servant of God, should be-
have him selfe in prayer.*

YOU must know therefore,
said Alphonso, that he is said
to have his soule adorned and
bewtified, that hath his naturall
appetites conformable with his
reason and Gods will and Law.
And this conformity is none o-
ther thing, but a certaine heape
of vertues, which placed orderly
in the soule make it bewtifull, &
directe it as is conuenient for the
great dignity therof, mitigating
and

and repressing, all false and euill
concupiscences, which had stuck
in the soule by sinne, and dispo-
singe it to serue, and without all
contradiction, to yelde gratefull
obedience to the will of him that
created it.

And because our own strength
and powers, are verie weake and
vnable to obteyne such thinges:
I will teache you first, how to
call for helpe from God by pray-
er. Secondly, how by many par-
ticular actes, you must build these
habits of vertues, speakinge of
some few which be principall.
Thirdly, how you must subdue
and keepe in seemly order, your
four

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four naturall passions, Ioy, Sorrow, Hope, and Feare.

OF PRAYER.

FOR Prayer then, you must know, that Gods pleasure is, that we stande in neede of his supernaturall helpe, because the ende and felicity wherto he hath created vs, is supernaturall, that is the blisse of heauen. His will also is, that we aske and demande it of him, not, but that he desireth more to geue it vs, then we to take or aske it: But first that we may possesse and enioy the thing with more honour, which

we

we get with greater endeuour & labour in suing for it, and that we may as it were merit the same: And secondly, that as importune beggers, we may the oftner present our selues before him, and so come into more knowledge of his Maiesties greatnes, preheminance, and perfections, and more ioy in him, and loue him with a true knowledge and contempt of all things, which either are not God, or not furthering to him: and finally, with a perfect loue of vertue, and an hatred of all sinne. By which our necessity of prayinge to him, he keepeth vs with him as with a pledge:
For

For vnlesse we stood euer in need of him, we should quickly without doubt forget him.

To present our selues often before our Lord by prayer, said Probus, must needs bring vs, to many good things as you say: But in what sorte may our prayer be acceptable to God, and commodious to our selues?

That our prayer, said Alphonso, may be grateful in Gods sight, meritorious and effectuell, it is not so much needefull, that the thing we aske, be of great vawew, as that in our prayer we haue an high motiue or ende. For if his motiue that prayeth for the king-
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dome of heaven, and his that as-
kerb breade to eate, or health of
his body, be all one or equall,
their prayers be of equall merit,
not-withstandinge the thinges
they pray for, farr exceede, the

What motiue and ende, said
Probus, should we haue, to make
our prayer most excellent and ac-
ceptable?

We should aske or pray for
euery thinge, said Alphonso, be-
cause it is Gods blessed will that
we aske and haue it by prayer, &
that obteyninge it, we may be
more disposed, and better ena-
bled, to loue and serue him.

Thus

Thus the prayer for breade, or any other meanethinge, is of excellent merit, and so dispoled should we be in our harts, when we come to prayer, that if we thought it displeasinge or vngratfull to God, for vs to haue the thing, we would forthwith, neither desire nor aske the same. The hungry man comonly is moued to pray for bread, in reliefe of his necessitie: but the seruant of God that rightly praieth, ought not to aske meate, vertues, grace, glory, or any other thing, for his owne necessitie or benefite, but for fulfilling the will of his Lord, who much desireth that he haue them
expe

or expecting onely his petition, that he may geue them: so that the will of God (desiring that we haue the good I aske, & that I pray for it, and that by it I may be better disposed to serue him) must more moue me to desire and pray for it, then any joy or good I looke for therby.

May we not, said Probus, pray for Grace, vertues, forgiveness of our sinnes, the ioyes of heauen, or other good thinges, for some other good end besides this? A prayer, said Alphonso, may be deuout and good, which is for any good or indifferent thinge, to a good

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end

end, but there is no end or mo-
tue, which can make it so per-
fect and acceptable as this, in
which I am moued to pray on-
lie for the loue of God, & for
fulfillinge his blessed will, and
not vpon any loue to my self, to
or to the thinge I aske, or for
any other respect. And yet may
we in our prayers for this end,
keepe also a loue, to the good
thinge we aske, and wishe it to
our selues also with great per-
fection and merit: so that we
actually referr it thus, that
therefore we loue the thing & the
wish it, because it is Gods will
we loue it, and desire to haue wil

it. And so we make God, and
neither the thing, nor our sel-
ues, the end of our prayer.

I will geue you an example
of this, said Alphonso, againe,
and withall let you see, how to
use your wil rightly in pray-
ing.

A man may aske any thing
of his frend, either for the loue
he beareth to it, or for his own
commoditie, or for the loue of
his frend: Vsuallly men aske it
for their owne good and bene-
fite, and not for the loue of
their frend. Now the seruant
of God, should refuse with his
will to aske any thing, for the
loue

loue he beareth to the thinge
or for his owne commoditie,
and aske it onely for the loue
of his Lord, because it pleaseth
his Maiestie that he aske and
haue it, that he may serue and
please him the more: As he that
prayeth for pardon and remis-
sion of his sinnes, and sorow-
eth for them, shoulde doe it
more, because he seeth that to
be in his soule which offendeth
God, and for a desire he hath
to haue it pure, that so he may
yelde gratefull and acceptable
seruice to his Lord, then for
any feare of punishment or o-
ther harme or losse to himselfe

what

whatsoever. And againe, as he
that prayeth to escape tribula-
tions, ought to feelee in his
hart a desire, and accordingly
to pray to escape them, not
cheefly for auoyding daunger,
harme, or trouble, but for that
tribulations may be to him, an
impediment to serue God, car-
ryinge euer withall, an vnfai-
ned desire and will, that Gods
blessed will be done therein, if
at any time it please him to be
serued by his troubles and pai-
nes. And so finallie in askinge
for any other good, that we aske
it, not for our owne consol-
ation, but that hauinge it, we

may therby be more stirred vp
and furthered to serue & loue
God.

It will seeme easie to you, if
you remember what I toulde
you before concerning the vse
of your will, and the end that
you should haue in doinge all
thinges: and the example I
gaue you then, of him that re-
gardinge more his frendes ne-
cessity then his owne, bestowed
on him the medicine, which
he prouided for him selfe, will
serue here also.

I remember well, said Pro-
bus, what you said there.

Remember it said Alphon-
so,

so, and be diligent to produce
according to those instructiōs,
many actes, and in short time,
you will finde great sweetnes
to pray vpon this motiue,
though in the beginning, you
seeme to be drie, or without
comfort and deuotion, which
happeneth, because you leaue
your owne selfe loue, which e-
uer moued you before to pray.
But Gods loue increasinge in
you, deuotion and sweetnes
with exceedinge great merit,
will also increase.

See therefore you passe not
from asking one thing, to aske
an other, before you first in-

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cline

cline your will to aske it, because God would haue you to aske it, and that you intend to serue him by askinge it.

I vnderstande all this, said Probus.

If you so doe said Alphonso, then may we speake of getting vertues for adorning our soules.

THE FOWRTH EXERCISE.

*How to get the vertue of Humilitie,
Which is one of them, that our Sa-
uiour Willed vs to learne of himself.*

All vertues, said Alphonso, may best be read, and lear-

learned in the booke of life, & fountaine of wisdom our Saviour Christ. And let none hope nor thinke, they can be enriched with vertues, vnlesse they learne them of the Sonne of God made man, and principally of his sacred passion: for this is giuen vnto the world by the Father of heauen, as a most plentifull goulden myne, that out of it we may gather all treasures, see, and heare the excellency of euery vertue.

Therefore happy is he that by continuall meditation, entereth into the hidden and inner secrets of this myne: for there

there he shall finde stoared vp,
all the treasures of God.

What vertues, said Probus,
will he that we first learne of
him?

He hath willed vs said Al-
phonso, to learne of him selfe
two, which are, Humilitie, and
Patience, saying. *Learne of me
because I am meeke, and humble of
heart.* which two, when we haue
learned, we shall be full of true
wisedome, and not before. Of
these two therefore, I will tell
you how they may be gotten.

Many haue written of the
stepps and degrees of Humili-
tie, for it is a vertue the which
reaches

reacheth verie high, and descendeth verie lowe, and without stepps let no man hope to climbe to the topp thereof: but he that once arriueth thither, shall presently come into such knowledge of himselfe, and all things, that thereby he shall most clearly see how of himselfe, he is, and hath verie nothinge, and that onely God is the thinge, that trulie is. For which cause he desireth that all the thoughtes and powers of men be bent to praise & magnifie him onely, whose is euerie thing that is. Moreouer, he wisheth (because Humility co-
ucteth

ueth nomore then is its owne)
that the whole world entreate
and esteeme him as he is, that
is for nothing: And that menns
harts be not occupied, yea for
any litle moment, in esteeming
that to be of someworth, which
in truth is nothing, or a vessell
of iniquity, which is worse the
nothing, as euery sinner is.

Herein therefore consisteth
the key of Humilitie, that this
which I haue now said, may be
fixed in our hartes, by many
actes of good considerations
couetinge with-all, that they
which harne or dispise vs, and
that they also which see it, may
thinke

ne) thinke vs to suffer, not vpon
ate humilitie, but because we can
hat not otherwise doe, as S. Bona-
hns uenture saith, that he which
for labourerth to please God, must
ing endeuour to be thought vile
rich and abiecte, not humble and
Hell modest.

thé Me thinkes, said Probus, it
were good to shew our Humi-
teth litie to others, for their edifi-
this cation.

y be If a man said Alphonso, were
any of such perfect vertue, that
ions without any repugnance or dif-
they ficulty, he coulde wishe to be
and esteemed of al men vile, abiect,
may and nothing, as I said before,
inke such

such a one might desire, for the edification of his neighbours, that they should thinke him to suffer iniuries willingly, and with ioy, for the loue of God and humilitie, and this were heroycal humility, which was most perfecte in our Sauour.

I pray you Father, said Probus, declare to me the humilitie of our Sauour, seeinge I must haue it before mine eyes, as a paterne to imitate.

The humility of our Sauour, said Alphonso, conteyneth in it, most high and vnspeakable misteries, and better may all

crea-

creatures admire it, then come
 nigh in folowinge it. For our
 Sauour beinge God omnipo-
 tente, of infinite goodnes, and
 a most perfect man, did choose
 and will with great ioy, to be
 esteemed for a moſte meane
 thing, yea almoſt for nothing,
 and for ſuch a one he would be
 hardly intreated with injuries,
 contumelies, reproches, & tri-
 bulations, from the firſt day of
 his birth, till he ſuffred a moſt
 ſharpe and ſhamefull death.
 All which he did, not for that
 they were needfull for himſelfe,
 but that wee who haue great
need thereof, might learne
the

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the manner of humbling our
selues by his example.

Now the seruant of God must
study & doe his best endeouour,
to frame his humilitie, like to
this of our Saviours: that is,
consideringe his owne ylenes,
abiection, and vnworthines,
he ought to couet and desire,
with great ioy (I say againe
with great ioy, for this is the
purchase) that in the eyes &
hartes of all men, he be repu-
red as worthlesse, and accor-
dingly to be intreated, for of
our selues we are none other,
nor deserue better. This is the
humilitie which our Saviour
would

would haue vs to learne of him.

Why doth God said, Probus, require of vs so great humilitie and contempt of our selues; and why would he teach it vs with so great cost and harme to himselfe?

He requireth it of vs, said Alphoso, because in truth it is conuenient for vs, and because that of our selues we haue no good, nor deserue any at all, though we receiue many good thinges from the magnificall hande of God, from whom we ought to acknowledge to haue receiued them, and therefore glorify him & not our selues. Againe he requireth

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it,

it, becaule it (being voluntarily taken) is the perfect medicine of our mortall infirmitie, which cometh by pride. Neither shall any man euer be soundly cured of that disease, without perfect humilitie.

And the more we want of perfect curinge, the more also we shall want of the puritie of our soule: and the more we want of the puritie of our soule, the more shall we want of Gods graces & benefites, and so much the lesse shall we be his. Now that he would teach it vs with so much harme to him selfe, proceeded from his infinite goodnes, and
from

from his most tender and ineffable loue to vs, not appointinge men, or Angels to this office, but delighting him selfe to be our instructour and guide, notwithstanding any harmes or inconueniencies, that might befall him therefore.

How may we, saide Probus, come to get this humilitie, and to reioyce in contempts, iniuries, and tribulations, for it is verie hard to desire these thinges?

We may obteyne all this, said Alphonso, by much considering the Humilitie of Gods Sonne, which I told you of before, and the profit that commeth to our

felues by it: and cheefely because we are so abled and made fit, to yeelde acceptable seruice vnto God; and to please him. Wherefore we must verie often incline our willes, to couet and with ioy desire, abiections, contempts, and iniuries, which are so precious and so profitable.

O how deseruedly ought he to be humbled; or to be humble, and to desire to be despised, that so often hath bene traiterous against his eternall Lord, yelding his soule to the deuill by sinne, and taking it from God, that so louingly died for it? Surely if we would seriousslie marke this, we should

should receiue honours (if at any time they were offered vs) with much greife, consideringe they hinder vs, of the inestimable goodes which we might get by imitating and accompanying the Kinge of heauen, in contempts, dishonours, contumelies, and the like.

May not a man with humilitie, said Probus, desire sometimes to be esteemed and honored?

Yes said Alphonso, he may desire this in some cales, as when (without respect of his owne estimation) he hath his eye, respect, and intention onely to some seruice, and honour which

he seeth, may redounde to God thereby.

But in this case also he ought to desire such estimation, both with feare and with some sorrow, that he must be honored: & with great circumsp^{ecti}ō, that he be not de-
ceiued with selfe loue.

How may I know, said Probus, whether in such case as this, I keepe humilitie, with that desire of honour?

You may know and discerne this, said Alphonto, if you ioy no whit in that estimation and honour, but onely in the seruice & honour which is done to God by it. And againe, if you feele in
your

your hart an vnfained desire or disposition, that leauing all honour & estimation (if so it might please God) you had rather for your owne part, choose to yeeld him your seruice, by sufferinge contempts, dispisinges, disgraces, and iniuries, then by that estimation, credit, and honour.

And lastly, if you finde your hart as desirous and ioyfull, that other men be esteemed & honoured for the seruice and honour of God, as your selfe, or that they be preferred before you, without any emulation.

When a man, said Probus,
hath receiued benefites & good
L 4 gifts

gifts from God, why may he not delight and reioyce in them?

He may ioy and delight in the, said Alphonso, so he keepe humilitie withall, and fall not into vaine-glorie: for otherwise he should turne al Gods gifts to his dishonour, and his owne greuous ruyne. I must therefore by the way, geue you warning of vaine-glorie, which is a vice that defileth and destroyeth, all our vertues and good deedes, vnlesse we auoide it well.

I pray you, said Probus, teach me to elcape it.

THE

THE FIFTH EXERCISE.

How to overcome the vice of vaine-glory, Which is a mortall enemy to Humilitie, and to all vertue.

VAine-glory, said Alphonso, is the Mother of all euil, and it aboue all other thinges, hindreth the increase of Humilitie. It is a complacency or delight and ioy, which one taketh of some thing he ought not, or in some sort as he ought not: and there be diuers kinds of it: As first, a man may glory and reioyce for
his

his owne wicked factes and euill deedes. This kind of glory and i-ye, is not amonge Gods children and seruantes, but proper to graceles and most wicked persons, and therefore I will lett it passe.

Againe, one may glory & ioy for some good thinge or gifte which he hath not: This also is most foolishe, vaine, and ridiculous, yet is it often incident to the good, as ordinary to the bad, proceedinge from a disordered selfe loue, and a proude minde, delighting in its owne praise and flatterie.

Againe, one may glory and reioyce

reioyce vaine lie, for some good
he hath or doth, or heareth of
himselfe: This is that kind, which
assaulteth much Gods seruantes.
Now a man may well ioye in the
giftes which he hath of God, so
farr forth as hee seeth and hopeth
thereby, some seruice to God or
profit to his owne soule: For God
hath left it in our owne liberty,
that we may so much ioy for e-
uery good gift of God, as we
know it to be from God, and to
redound to Gods honour & ser-
uice: But when it once passeth
this ordināce appointed by God,
by and by it becometh vaine glo-
rie, or vaine ioy exceedinge the
limits.

limits appointed by God, as glorying and reioycing in our selues, where we should glory onely in God.

How may we discerne, saide Probus, when our glory and ioye is vaine, or true and spirituall as it should be?

This vaine glory said Alphonso, is so deceiptfull and subtil: that one yet a nouice and weake in vertue, may often thinke him selfe to ioye in God for the good he hath, and neuerthelesse much vaine-glorie is mixed therewith. Wherefore till a man evidently know, and haue thoroughly tryed vertues to be in him selfe, he should

Should euer flee all kind of ioy & complacēcy, whiles he calleth to minde the benefites that he hath receiued from God, or the good giftes he hath, or heareth spoken of himselfe, and rather accustome his harte to motions of feare, at these times, as suspecting vaine-glorie which very secretly vseth to creepe vpon vs in such occasions. And surely he ought to suspect or thinke it vaine glorie and ioy which he hath of Gods gifts geuen him, so longe as he hath not as much ioy and glorie in the giftes and benefites, which he knoweth other men to haue receiued from God, as he hath of
his

his owne . For albeit we ought
to desire and choose vertues for
our selues, before other, and also
to ioy that (seing it is Gods will
and ordinance, that both we and
others should haue them) it hath
pleased him to bestow the vpon
vs: yet when both we and they,
haue receiued gifts from Gods
bountifull hande, seing God him
selfe equally ioyeth in both, our
ioy and glory in like sorte, ought
to be equal for them both in God
only, and that his blessed will is
fulfilled.

I vnderstand this, said Pro-
bus: but teach me I pray you,
how I may auoide this fowle
sinne

sinne of vaine-glorie, and vaine
ioy.

You may, said Alphonso, by
the vse of your vnderstanding &
will, ouercome it, and escape all
the daunger thereof. For by the
assistance of Gods grace you can
hate that, which you once know
to be vaine and false. Consider
therefore, the vanitie and false-
hood thereof, by this example or
comparison.

You will confesse it to be a
fowle thinge, if some courtier
would esteeme it for a matter of
great valew or worth, or would
glory in his harte, that he had of-
fered him selfe to a litle daunger
for

for the seruice and loue of his Prince, who had yeelded himselfe before, to moste greivous torments and cruell wounds, for the courtiers sake and cause.

But if the same courtier, did not onely in his owne conceipte, highly esteeme that litle he had done for his Prince, to whom he was so infinitely bound and behoulding, but moreouer before others, would proudly vaunt himselfe thereof, it were most ridiculous, to-too grosse follie, intolerable pride and leuitie: Yet were it more abhominable vanitie by farr, if that Prince had suffered

ferred al his torments and woundes voluntarily and without any comfort or succour of his courtier, but the courtier contrariwise, had suffered his litle with great fauour, assistance, and comfort, of the Prince, and hauinge promise also before hi laboures, of great benefites and rewards, and receiued the same afterwardes: So in like manner he falleth into no lesse abhominable vanitie, yea and into worle incomparably, that foloweth after vaine-glorie. For our high God, and Kinge of incomprehensible Maiestie, of infinite power and honour, through his owne good-

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nes onely without any bonde,
behoulding our extreme necessi-
ties, for our sakes and safties, ex-
posed him selfe, to a most sharpe
and ignominious death: In which
we not onely gaue him no com-
fort nor succour, but moreouer
we yeelded him no thanks, yea
all that were with him, fledd &
forsooke him: and we also more
forsake him now through defect
of our vertue, whē his Godhead,
mercy, and goodnes, are mani-
fested vnto vs. Which thinges
beinge thus, let vs acknowledge
how vaine it is, for any man to
glory for his seruice he doth to
God, omitting in the meane sea-
son,

son, to glory & ioye in God on-
lie. And moreouer let vs consi-
der, how exceeding vaine it is, to
desire for this small seruice, to be
highly esteemed with others,
whereas for that time whiles
their hartes are occupied, in iud-
ginge vs to be of some worth,
they cease to be occupied in wor-
thily esteeming and praising God,
of whom we haue, and whose
is, all our good.

God forbidd, that the hart
which is not occupied in highly
esteeming and praising God, to
whom all praise is due, should
be occupied in iudginge of any
worth, to whom no such thinge

is due. And he also deserueth much blame for his consentinge, that thinketh other to occupy their hartes, in praising & esteeming him being so vile and abiect, ceasing in that meane time to magnify God for all his goodnes and giftes, and is not ashamed nor greued, for so great disorder and abuse of thinges. It augmenteth also greatly our vanitie, that whatsoeuer we do, or suffer, all is by the mighty grace and helpe of our most high God.

It is said Probus, a thing both glorious and meritorious, that we accept the gifts and graces of God, & not reiect or resist them:
and

Of Vaine glorie.

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and then why may we not glorie
and thinke wel of our selues that
we accepted them?

We neuer saw man, said Al-
phonso, that would vainly glory
and boast, onely because he had
accepted benefites, done him by
a Prince, but rather it would haue
bene iudged plaine madnes, to
haue refused them. And it is great
folly for a man to glory & boast,
that he would not be mad when
he might, or proudly to behaue
and esteeme him selfe, because
he would not leap into a pit and
drowne himselfe when he might
haue done it. Much lesse cause
surely hath any man to glory, be-
cause.

M 2

cause.

cause he accepted Gods giftes & refused them not, consideringe that their verie accepting & will to receiue them, is not done by their owne power and abilitie or nature, but principally by the grace and helpe of God, as S. Paule saith. 1. Cor. 4. *What hast thou that thou hast not receiued? & if thou hast receiued it, why dost thou glory?*

Now after your vnderstanding hath had these and such like considerations of this vice, moue and incline your will, as I taught you before, to refuse and hate it: And standing firmly in the true conceipte of your owne basenes and vnwor-

vnworthines, yeld all praise and glory to God to whom it is due, and in him only, let all your ioye and glory be and rest.

The actions of your will, you must diligently vse in all occasions, where this vaine-glorie would creepe in, and draw you to delight in your selfe, or in any thing you haue. This may suffice concerning the euil vice of vaine-glorie. Now will we speake of patience which is the second vertue we are to learne of our Sauiour Christ, vnlesse you reste vnsatisfied in some thing I haue said.

Goe forwarde, said Probus,

M 4

I

I pray you, for I vnsterstand you well, and haue nothing to reply.

THE SIXT EXERCISE.

How to plant in our soules, the vertue of Patience, which is one of the two vertues, which our Saniour would haue vs to learne of him.

Patience, said Alphonso, is so deare a sister and companion to Humility, that comonly they are found together: And by what waies and pathes, the one is found, you may finde the other also. And as we laid before, that
to

to get Humilitie, it is necessarie,
we set before our eyes, the hu-
militie of Gods Sonne: so
must we doe a'lso the same here,
for obteyninge this vertue of Pa-
tience. For who can complaine
or repine in sufferinge iniuries,
or any tribulation (hauing deser-
ued them as we all haue) when
he considereth with how great
mildenes and patience, his Lord
God voluntarily did choose to
suffer so manie and so great iniu-
ries, contumelies, perlecutions,
and tormentes, together with a
most bitter death, who (besides
that he was true God and Lord
of all) was also a man of more
noble

noble, delicate, and tender complexion, then any other man in the worlde, and more feelinge, any affliction.

Who will not patiently and mildly sustaine for curinge his owne sinnes, any toyle, vexation, or distresse that may befall, if he consider his God to haue susteyned farr greater for the sinnes of other, and to bringe remedy to our euills?

The example of our Sauour, said Probus, should indeed moue and suffice vs to take any aduersity patiently: but our fraile natures, can not away with trouble or affliction.

Natur

Naturally indeede, said Alphonso, we are inclined to flee and abhorre them, but Gods grace preuenting our wills and cooperating with vs, we may be brought in short time, to accept and embrace them: and this the rather, if we consider, not onlie this example which our Sauiour hath geuen vs, but moreouer cast our eye, to the great comoditie we gett therby, which our Lord also is desirous we labour to obtaine.

For persecutions and tribulations, are as it were a hammer, or fire, wherewith the rust or canker of our soules is taken away: or as

a launcing kni'e, thrust into our
soules, to let out the poyson of
our selfe loue, which festreth
there, and draweth vs from all
good; that once freed from that
filthe, we may worke the high
worke of God, that is, loue and
serue him as we should: for which
cause, we ought hartely to loue
and pray for our persecutours, &
thanke God that prouideth vs so
good surgeons.

Teache me the way, said Pro-
bus, I pray you, to get this vertue.

If you remember said Alphon-
so, I taught it you before, when
we talked of the way, how to
plant vertuous habits in our sou-
le.

le. For there I put the example of Patience, which may suffice also for this place.

I remember it very well, said Probus.

That also which I taught you said Alphonso, of the hatred of your selfe, you must call to minde againe in this matter, for the reasons I gaue you why you should hate your selfe, may serue fitlie, to moue you to suffer patiently, any aduersitie or affliction. Now let vs propounde one example of some odious matter, that may befall.

You either suspect or certeinlie know, a man to speake or reporte

porte some euill of you , which
you neuer committed.

Hereby three dartes are caste
at you to wound your soule: from
all which the souldier & seruant
of God , must cleare and acquit
him selfe, that by his fight, his
Lord may be serued & honored,
and his owne soule bewtified.

The first is , the dart of euill
suspition or iudgement, against
the man, or against his intention.
From this dart you must with-
draw your selfe, and let it passe;
inclining your will, not to accept
or deale with it, as consenting to
any such suspition or iudgement,
but to refer it wholly vnto God,
who

Of Patience. 171

God, who is the high Iudge of all, and hath willed vs not to iudge. For fulfilling of whose will, we ought with great ioy to forbear to iudge, & not to vsurp or take vpon vs his office.

The second is, the darte of greivous impatency; To this you must oppose your selfe with all your strength, ioying in the paine and iniury, which cometh to you by that occasion: and the more you seeme to ioye of it, the lesse will the deuill assault you with impatience, lest he geue you occasion of so great meritt.

That you may well demeane your selfe in receiuing this dart,

remem-

remember what I said of the hatred of your selfe.

The third is the dart of hatred, of him whom you suspecte or know, to haue done you wrong. To this also you must oppose your selfe, inclininge your will, to produce some singular acte of loue towards him, because it is Gods will, that you loue and pray for your enemies. And in truth as I said, they doe you exceeding great good, if your selfe hinder it not, and they be as surgeons, to cure the festering woundes of our soule.

Thus in all occasions of aduersitie, the seruant of God should be

be watchfull, and euer stand prepared patiently to endure, whatsoever it pleaseth his Lord to let befall for his tryall, that in so doing, he may honour his Lord, benefite, and (as our Sauour said) possesse his owne soule, which remaineth as voide of all good, captiue to the deuill, and quite loste, if it be spoiled of this vertue of patience.

Now if you thinke good, let vs speake of the foure affections, or passions of the soule.

N

THE

THE SEAVENTH EXERCISE.

How to moderate and keepe in order, the foure naturall passions of the soule.

THese passions said Alphonso, be Ioy, Sorow, Hope, and Feare: and they be naturall to euery one, as to ioy for a present good, to sorow for a present euill, to hope for a future good, and to feare a future euill.

I will teach you how to guide and bridle them conueniently for the seruice and honour of God, and the repaying of your soule.

For

SE. For they may bring vs much
or. harme if they be lefte at libertie
vnrestrayned, because they neuer
cease ranging vpp and downe in
our soules, now one, now an o-
ther.

on. And we may well say, that all
pe. our euills come vpon vs, because
rall they are permitted, to wander a-
re. bout, and runne vnbridled: yea
ent they bring much annoyance and
od, hurte to spirituall persons, how
lightly soeuer they walke in the.

ide He onely may keepe them in
for good order & great moderation,
od, that worketh all thinges, as well
ule. internall as externall, for God, as
For I toulde you before, and walketh

in the hatred of him selfe, as you haue heard.

When are these affections said Probis, kept in due order & moderation?

When we yelde, said Alphonsus, no consent to any of their motions, further than we know pleaseth God, and whereby he may receiue some gratefull seruice. Otherwise, we ought euer to repell their motions & banish them from vs, if we desire to walke a safe way towards God.

May we not, said Probis, be glad and ioyfull for any good thinge that hapneth vnto vs, and in like sorte be sorowful for euill?

The

The seruants of God, said Alphonso, should be gladd and ioy in nothing but God, or thinges which belong or direct and further them to him. The reason is, for that hauinge in God, and in such thinges, so great cause and matter of ioyes, they are verie foolish and most vaine, that occupie them selues, in ioying for any other, considering their powers and force to ioy in God and loue him, are the weaker, by how much more they are diuided, into diuers ioyes and busines. And consideringe againe, that albeite wee yelde our selues wholly to ioy in God, yet are we not able

to doe it sufficiently: How much lesse can we doe it, if we distract our selues to ioy in many things.

Wherefore by the vse and power of our will, as I tould you before, we must doe one of these two, either presently so soone as it offereth it selfe, repell, and put away all ioye and gladnes which is not in God, or thinges belonging vnto him: or direct and order it for God, as the ende thereof, so it be not some vaine or unlawfull ioye.

And thus shall we doe as the Apostle willeth vs. *Phil. 4.* saying: *Ioy in our Lord at all times:* say againe, *ioye.* For the which cause

cause, we must looke warely about vs, for daily innumerable things of small weight, occurre and offer them selues to vs, bringing occasions and causes of ioy and gladnes: from which forthwith we ought to vnwinde our selues, knowinge all ioyes which are offered vnto vs by the world, are assured harmes, and no good to vs at all.

In a moste potent and riche King, you know it woulde be iudged, a very base and vile disposition, to make so great reckoning of a peny, that the winning of it would make him very ioyful, & the loosing of it, very sor-

rowful and greiued: But far greater is our basenes and vilitie, if when alwaies we haue present, the infinite goodes which God possesseth for him selfe and vs, in which we ought incessantly to ioye, we turne our selues to ioy in other triflinge thinges which occurre in the world, when especially we ought to loue our Lord more then our selues, and more to respect his glory thē our own, which yet he will geue vs most abundantly, if we faithfully and sincerely serue him, in this our banishment.

OF SOROW.

IN like sort may we speake of him, that soroweth for any thinge of this worlde that may happen, except sinne and things inducing thereto. For it may be be well iudged great basenes, to sorow for any such temporall thinge of this life, whereas we haue before our eyes, so great glorie and inestimable goodes as I said God hath prouided for vs, for which we ought euer to reioyce and be gladd. Wherefore the seruant of God, must suffer no sorow nor heauines to stay in his
his

his harte, but that onely which is for sinne; because this sorow being a passion which respecteth some present euill, or some good lost, and true euills and losses can not happen, but onely for sinne, he ought with reason to sorowe for none other thinge. And ha- uing present so infinite an euill to sorowe for as sinne is, he doth most foolishlie, if deuidinge his force and strength, he sorowe for any other thing besides; conside- ring especially, that all his pow- ers and abilities collected to this one worke, suffice not to sorow so much for sinne, as he should doe.

These

These sorowes which offer
them selues daily to vs vpon any
tribulation or aduersitie, we may
easily repell, if we consider, that
we be Gods more then our own,
& that he hath more tender care
ouer vs, then we can haue of our
selues, and best knoweth what is
expedient for vs. And therefore
what painfull thing or aduersity
soeuer hapeneth, it ought to be
welcome to vs, so long as it en-
dureth, and we must take it ioy-
fullie, as from the hande of our
louinge Lord, and as a thing fitt
and conuenient for one that is
Gods, and sorow no more for it,
then God (whose we are) wil-
leth

leth that we sorow, speakinge thus within our selues: Why haue I greater care of my selfe, then my Lord God willeth that I haue, seing I am not mine owne but his, who loueth me tenderlie, and can not but continually behould me?

May we not then, said Probus, seeke meanes to deliuer and free our selues from sufferinge such painefull thinges and aduersities, or shoulde we beare them still with ioy, and let them alone to Gods care and prouidence?

As it is Gods will, said Alphonso, that so long as we haue them, we euer suffer them with
ioy

ioy; how painfull soeuer they be,
and take them as from the hand
of our most louing father (which
ioyfull patience, will greatly mi-
tigate their paine) so it is also his
will, that we procure and vse
with ioyfull moderation, such
meanes for our remedie, and de-
liuerance, as we know he hath
left vs, & would haue vs to take,
as phisicke in sicknes, meate in
hunger, peace and saefty in per-
secution, and the like: but all this
because it is his will we doe it,
and that our frailties may serue
him the better, being deliuered
from such molestations and trou-
bles.

How

How shall we, said Probus, driue away and expell, these motions of sorowes & greifes, which the miseries of this world bring hourly vpon vs, and how shall we get this ioy, whiles we are in the paines of them?

The seruant of God, said Alphonso, must be alwaies prouident and watchfull, and so soone as the passion of sorow or greife beginneth to rise, by occasion of any aduersitie, presently reiect & refuse it by the acte of his will, as I coulde you in the vse of that power, in the first instruction: Yea he must endeouour to moue and enforce his will to couer & em-

embrace the thinges wherupon those paines, greiues, and afflictions, growe. For whiles these things be desired, the sorow ceaseth as it arose at the first, because the same thinges were disliked or hated. He should therefore acquaint and accustome him selfe, to ioy and be glad, in all painfull and sorowfull thinges, and contrariwise, to sorow in all thinges which are ioyfull and bringe delight, as it is said.

*Sorow for ioy, and ioy for paine.
Kepe with thee as a certain gaine.*

Why should we, said Probus,
couet

couet these things, whereby such greife & molestation come to vs?

First, said Alphonso, because they come all from the hand of God, as Iob saith. Againe, because we deserue them by our finnes. Lastlie, because they bringe to vs many commodities, & cure the festred vlcers of our soule.

OF HOPE.

Now by Hope (not as it is the third supernaturall vertue, but a naturall affection or passion, common to all mankind) we expecte and looke for many thinges of this life, either pleasant

sant or commodious to vs. Yet nothing we hope for, should settle it selfe or take place in our hartes, but onely God, and those thinges whereby we thinke our selues, to draw nearer to him & serue him. Whatsoever is besides, we ought to esteeme it as nothinge. And if we perceiue the hope of any thinge, to be more fixed in our harte, or to occupie and delighte our mindes, then the blisse of heauen, or vertues, which we hope from God, it must forth-with be expelled, as a most hurtfull and disordered thinge.

O

OF

OF FEARE.

IN like manner also, all feare is to be lefte that is not of God, as our Sauour willed vs, not to feare them that kill the bodie, & can doe no more, but God that can cast both body and soule into hell fire. And Dauid said, *God is the protectour of my life, whom shall I feare.* All the moments of our liues, with all thinges belonging vnto vs, are in the hande of God, and can not happen to vs, otherwise then he will permit. And therefore we should rather wish our owne eyes to be pulled out,
then

then aduisedly commit any thing that may displease his Maiesty: for all other thinges, there is no cause why we should feare them.

For though all the calamities of the worlde fall vpon vs, yet if we feare them not, they can doe vs no harme nor true euill, but rather if we encounter them corragiously and bouldly, and receiue them ioyfullie, because it is our Lordes will we suffer them in memory of those he suffered for vs, they will increase in vs, eternall merit of glory and honour.

Wherefore we should be prepared alwaies to repute as nothing,

thing, or rather to esteeme as most precious Iewels and ornaments, all troubles and molestations of the worlde. And if at anie time some feare creepe vpon vs, presently with our will, to encounter and repell it, lest it occupie the place, in which the reuerent feare of God (most necessary for vs) should be harboured.

He that can moderate, rule, and subdue, these passions in this sorte, shall enioye great peace, and arriue shortly, to high perfection of vertue, & be able rightlie to iudge of all things, as the Christian Philosopher Boetius saith,

If

If thou wilt the truth behoulde
With light most cleare:

Away With Ioy, Sorow, Hope,
and Feare.

Hauinge declared, what way
you may repaire the ruyne and
destruction of your soule, it re-
maineth now that we speake of
the loue of God, which Exercise
is the most principall seruice we
can doe him, and the ende of all
which we haue spoken of hi-
therto.

Take your rest now, for you
are wearie with trauell: in the
morning God willing, we shall
make an ende of this matter.

THE THIRDE PARTE.

Conteining the way how to loue
God, our neighbours, and
our selues.

Of the loue of God.

AFTER they had slept awhile,
and Alphonso finished his
vsuall deuotions, they came to-
gether againe, and Alphonso said.

Now my sonne, if you be sa-
tisfied in all thinges we talked of
yester night: Let vs goe forward
as I promised you.

I rest fully satisfied said Pro-
bus,

bus, in all you haue said hitherto: Therefore I pray you proceede to teach me, how I may loue God.

The loue of God said Alphonso, is a fire, which God would haue alwayes burninge, on the Altar of our soule, and if you thoroughly knewe the worthines and excellency thereof, all would seeme litle, that hitherto we haue said, of the reparation and adorning of the soule, by which so high a worke is to be performed. For the acte of louing God is of so great excellency, that no Saint in heauen, nor any thinge that is or can be created, can doe any

worke more high or perfect. For which cause the Sonne of God himfelfe, calleth this the greatest and first commaundement. *Mat.* 22. Yea if all the endeouours and strengthes of Angells and men, were heaped together in one Angell or man, he could do nothing more worthy, then is the acte of louing God. And nothing that is or can be made, by the omnipotente power of God, can be sufficient to loue God with that perfectiō which his infinit goodnes and worthines doth deserue.

This loue of God, incomparably excelleth al other supernaturall vertues or works, and without

out it, none other gift or quality that man hath, profiteth him any thing at all, or is to be esteemed, as S. Paule saith largelie. 1. Cor. 13. This is the incessant and eternall worke of God himselfe: for he being of infinite goodnes and excellency, is infinitely to be loued, and is continually occupied with all his infinite power, in louinge his owne infinite goodnes and ioying in the same. And nothing being more consonante to equitie, nothing so profitable or glorious to our selues, then that we loue him, who is infinitely to be beloued, and whom we can not sufficiently loue as he deser-

deserueth, albeit our strength & abilities were infinite: His most holy and righteous will is, that we doe the same thinge, with all our forces, which he doth continually with his: that is, loue him and ioy in him with all our harts, power, and strength. Yea and so greatly he requireth and desireth this most diuine worke of vs, that he would yeld himselfe to a most cruell death, that so he might procure and prouoke vs to loue him, and all this for our good, and not for any benefit of his owne.

All other thinges besides this loue of God which are commanded

& unded vs, or in the holy scriptures required of vs, are but for that they be helpes to this loue, and to omit them, would greatly hinder the same. Vices & sinnes forbidden vs, are nothing els, but an inordinate loue of vaine things, which occupy the place of our hartes, deputed onely for God. Neither doe vertues serue for other ende, then aptly to dispose the soule for this loue: Which vertues notwithstanding, are so necessarie for this loue of God, that it were great presumption, to thinke we coulde obtaine it, without great exercise in them.

To loue God, said Probus,
must

must of necessitie be a worke, of great excellencie and worthines: but I pray you tell me what this loue is, and how it may be done?

I must tell you first, said Alphonso, how there be two sortes of loues, or louers of God. The one loueth him, for that he is a sweete and bountiful Lord, most liberally cōmunicating his goodness to his creatures: These are also much delighted in his seruice, and they aske many giftes of him, and pray with great contemplation of his Magnificency, and knowledge of the excellencie of vertues and graces which they pray for. Often also they come

come to him, as to the fountaine
of all sweetnes: and by reason of
the great delight & consolation,
which they feele in their soule,
they imagine this loue of theirs,
to be most perfect and of highest
merit.

This seemeth, said Probus, to
be a perfect louer of God.

I wishe, said Alphonso, that
all they which loue not God,
woulde loue him at the least in
this sorte. But the Maiestie of
God permitteth not his true lou-
ers to be content with this kinde
of loue, though it be good, & may
suffice to exercise beginners and
nouices in for some time, because
from

from this they easely passe, to the highest and most perfect loue, wherof by and by I will tell you.

How may we know said Probus, that this kind of loue, is imperfect and fraile?

They that loue in this manner, said Alphonso, forth-with when this sensuall sweetenes is wantinge and departed, go with an heauy hart, and dull courage about thinges which belonge to God. And they are so ouercome with the frailties of their owne nature, as almost if they had not had any such loue at all. For they procure and seeke for corporall delights, as to eate and drinke daintely:

daintely: They desire and accept
worldly fauours, frendships, ho-
nours, praise, estimation, and o-
ther vaine thinges, pleasing their
sensualitie (yet without mortall
sinne) asmuch as other persons,
that neuer had tasted of thinges
pertaining to God. Yea and often
in the very time when they are
visited with such sweetnes, they
are intangled with certaine vaine
affections, and such as be somet-
imes not a litle sensuall; as deligh-
ted with the sweet natures, con-
ditions, familiarities, and bewtie,
of some persons.

Againe, these louers common-
ly couet to be seene and account-
ed

ted deuout, and they are greeued when they perceiue, they are not reputed for such: neither do they ioy whē they perceiue other persons to be reckned more deuout and better qualified then themselves. These and such like spotts and imperfections they haue: all which be so abiect, that the high loue of God (which we are to speake of) doth not brooke them with it, no not when it wanteth that sweetnes in the sensuall appetites: whereby we may rightlie conclude, this kinde of loue, to be fraile and imperfect, as louing cheefely for his owne commodity or delight.

If this loue will not serue, to what purpose is it, said Probus?

It is verie profitable, said Alphonso, first, because he that hath it, may easely cast from him the forsaide imperfections & spottes, with the loue of vaine thinges.

Secondly, because such a ouer, is in a verie neare disposition, to produce many actes of the highest and most perfect loue, when he knoweth it.

Which is then this second kinde of loue, said Probus?

It is said Alphonto, *A certaine acte of worke of our will, vehementlie (and sometimes also with sweetnes) louing or desiring, that God be*

P

that

that infinite goodnes he is: and possesse almuch glory, dominion, and power, as indeede he possesseth to him selfe ouer vs, and all thinges. And againe, that whatsoever is, or may be, loue him, serue him, and glorify him, for his infinite goodnes and worthines onely. And all this is done for that the excellency of his Majesty requireth that we doe it, with all our strength and ability.

He therfore that would truly and perfectly loue God, must often meditate and call to minde what God is, and delight in him. Moreouer thinke what great glorie he hath, and what dominion

ouer vs and al creatures, and ioye
for it, as men are wonte to ioye
for the dignitie and dominion of
their dearest frendes. And with
this also he must wishe, that all
thir ges may lerne and loue him,
desiring this a thousand wayes,
and procuringe it ten thousand,
and all this for God & his good-
nes only. For it is meete and iust,
that we loue his infinite good-
nes and power, in most excellent
manner that may be deuised. And
beinge no end is higher then God
him selfe, who is the beginnunge
and end of all thinges; it folow-
eth, that he ought to be loued
principally, not for that which

we receiue or hope for of him,
but for him ſelfe which is infinit-
lie amiable.

Wherefore we ſhould accu-
ſtome our willes, that they be
moued to loue and to be delight-
ted, in the perfection, glorie, and
treasures of our Lord, not becau-
ſe we feele ſweetnes in this loue,
nor for the giſtes we haue recei-
ued or hope to receiue hereafter
but forgetinge as it were theſe
things, loue him as moſt wor-
thy to haue al the willes & pow-
ers of Angells and men occupied
in de'ring & delighting that his
Maieſtie haue all the infinit good
it hath, without reſpect that any
part

parte thereof, may redound to vs,
though indeed so much the more
shall come to vs, by how much
more we loue him without res-
pect of our owne good.

By what certaine marke or
signe, said Probus, may we know,
when a man hath this loue?

He hath it, said Alphonso, that
loueth God asmuch when he
sheweth himselfe seuerer & sharpe,
as when he is sweete and milde;
asmuch when by iustice he puni-
sheth, as when mercifullly he ge-
ueth benefites: asmuch in aduer-
sities as prosperity. Such a man lo-
ueth not God because he is de-
lightfull and sweet, yet he loueth

sweetnes, because it is geuen by God, and bringeth him courage to serue God more diligently: He is not terrified nor affrighted with chastisements, but taketh them with that loue, which the holy hande and fatherly will of God that scourgeth doth require. He praieth not, as drawne with loue and sweetenes of the gift, but that his soule enriched thereby, may waxe stronger and more feruent in Gods seruice. He is not offended or troubled to see him self desolate of consolations, yet he soroweth if any thing be in him which hath displeased or doth offend, the eyes of so high

a Maieftie. He asketh not forge-
uenes and pardon of his finnes
for escaping paine, or recouering
his lost grace, vertues, title, and
right to eternall glorie, but that
his soule (hauing obteyned par-
don) may be more gratefull and
acceptable to God, and may loue
and serue his highnes in puritie.

He hath no affection, that may
withdraw his hart any other way
from God. He doth not remem-
ber or regarde, whether men
thinke of him or noe. He is not
greeued, when he is contemned
or reiected. He shunneth, and is
sorowfull for credit and honour
offered him, fearing lest they be

vnto him, hinderances to humilitie. He ioyeth for the good and honour of others, thinking that they accept or desire them, without ambition or vanitie, for the better seruice of God and helpe of his people. Such a louer hath all things, and yet hath nothing. He submitteth him selfe to all, and all serue him. He shunneth all sweetnes, and he feeleth nothing but that it is sweete. In God whom he loueth, he knoweth what he ought to doe, to speake, to thinke: and for him only he thinketh, he speaketh, he doth euery thing. He liuing, is not he that liueth, but it is Christ that liueth

liueth in him, geuing him to liue
a diuine life. In louing him selfe,
he loueth not him selfe, but he
loueth God almighty, for, whose
sake he desireth all good things.
He ioyeth in nothinge, but that
whereby his Lord is serued, and
that he thinketh gratefull in his
sight. And finallie, he euer ioy-
eth in his hart and thanketh God
who in louing him selfe infinitely,
doth supply what is due to him
from all his creatures.

How may we get this loue of
God, said Probus?

It is vaine presumption, said
Alphonso, for any man to thinke,
he can leape to it at his pleasure,
with-

without making due preparatiō,
and folowinge the same pathe
which Gods lonne hath made vs,
both by his owne example and
doctrine.

What preparation or pathes
are these, said Probus?

He that would receiue this
pretious liquour into his soule,
said Alphonso, must first of ne-
cessity occupy him selfe for many
dayes in these Exercises which I
tould you of in the second parte,
but before all, in the holie hatred
of him selfe: otherwise he shall
be deceiued and profit nothinge
at all.

I vnderstand you well, saide
Pro-

Probus.

That done, said Alphonso, he must woorke diligently in this sorte, whether he be preuented by God with benedictions of sweetnes or not. He must breefly call to minde, how vnmeasurable and infinite the good & glorie is that God possesseth, considering him as the best and most worthy, that all creatures ioy for his goodnes, and thereupon by and by incline his will to desire, and ioy for so great a good of his Lord, and let him continew in that act so long as he can. If he be a litle distracted or waxe colde in it, let him forth-with returne

to it againe in the same manner, his hart euer leaping with ioy, in considering God to be full of infinite perfections and goodnes; and by continuance, he shall doubtles be aduaunced to this perfect loue.

The honour, glorie, and perfections of our Lord, are infinite and of infinite excellency, and in like sort, euery thinge in particular that he worketh or createth, doth shew forth and declare to vs, a singular goodnes and worthines in him. And seing that all the moments of our life, suffice not fully to heare, or consider the as they are in him, we ought
at

at the least, vnder name and title of infinite goodnes, honour, and perfections, to heape them together, and to produce actes of co-ueting, that God haue them all, and to ioy all the minutes of our life that he hath them, cōsidering we ow al this to him as most due. And so much may we exercise our selues in these actes (although we want that sweetenes which they call deuotion) that in euery place and busines, we may oft loue God in this sorte, without seeking any solitary places, as it hapeneth daily when one friend ioieth sodanly without more opportunitie of place or companie, when

when he heareth or remembreth
some good to haue befallen his
deare frende. That which I tould
you before of the vse of your wil,
and of the end of al your actions,
helpe much in these actes how
you shoulde produce them. and
that you must doe al for this end,
because God is most worthy of
it, and desireth that we doe it for
him.

Perhaps said Probus, we might
gett this loue more easilie by
prayer, doing as you taught me,
when you spake of it, and by the
exercises of those vertues you re-
herfed before.

He shall obteyne it, said Al-
phonso,

phonso, the sooner and better, that together with prayer, will helpe him selfe with the acts of his will, as I told you before: which he may doe both in prayer, and without it. For in euery such act, there is a new seruice to God, and a new increase of the loue of God, of grace, & of merit.

And as no artificer, how skilfull soeuer he be, profiteth any thing by his arte, but onely whiles he worketh in it: so the seruant of God, is made richer in the loue of God, but onely when he produceth speciall actes of the same loue: Which acte of loue, how short soeuer it be, beinge a
farr

farr greater, better, more precious, and a more inestimable good, then all thinges els that any creature can doe in heauen or earth: We ought euery houre many times to worke it, that doinge our best endeouour in it during this life, we may receiue more grace and ability to worke it for euer in heauen, where those blessed Saints loue God more feruently and more perfectly, which more loued him here on earth.

Wherefore we should deeply consider and condemne our own negligence and folly: and seinge we ought neuer to cease from this acte of louing God (both be-
cause

cause it is dew to his maiestie, and the acte of it selfe is of an inestimable profit) we should most bitterly lament, euery moment of our life that we let passe without this loue.

And specially we ought to bewaile our sinnes, which (if they be mortall) are deadly enemies to it, or (if they be veniall) hinder so great a good, and coole the feruour thereof. In like sorte also should we reprove our selues if we be not exceedinge glad and ioyfull, of euery thing that may further vs to it, as iniuries, contempts, persecutions, &c. Or if we sorow not so much when any

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impe-

impediment is geuen vs to it, as are humaine fauour, sensuall and prophane delectation, temporall honours, credit, prayses, &c.

Our frailty is such, said Probus, and our necessitie so great, that oftentimes we can not be gladd of iniuries, tribulations, & the like, nor refuse thinges delectable and prosperous.

If sometimes, said Alphonso, through weakenes of body, or becaule as yet we haue not gotten so much vertue as were needfull for our sufferinge of aduersities ioyfullie, but we must flee the & our perlecuteurs, or gaine procure and receiue delicate and pleasant

pleasant thinges: In such cases I
say, we must looke that we doe
these thinges with actuall inten-
tion for auoyding greater euills,
and sorow also much, in that by
fleinge aduersities and troubles,
we depart from a thinge which
shoulde further vs to so great a
good as is the loue of God. And
again that by takinge delectable
thinges, we omit and forgoe the
harpe, which are most due vnto
vnto vs for punishmēt of our sin-
nes and negligences.

Al this moreouer we ought to
doe with humble prayer to our
lord, that he would vouchsafe
to strengthen vs in body and loue.

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le,

le, for better resistinge our owne
frailtie, whereby through defect
of our vertue, it is needfull we
auoide such trouble, or vse such
delightfull thinges, and that also
by his grace, we may be disposed,
notwithstandinge these imped-
iments of our infirmitie, perfectly
to loue him.

What remedie and helpe haue
we, said Probus, if we finde our
selues verie dull and heauy, whi-
les we édeuour to produce these
actes of loue, and to bring all our
motions, into the obedience and
seruice of God : for so it often
hapneth in other exercises of de-
uotion and well doinge?

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The same may happen also in this high worke, said Alphonso, but then we may assure our selues, that it cometh because we want the holy hatred of our selues, which is the foundation and most principal disposition to this loue of God. Or againe, because there cleueth in our hartes some inordinate affectiō to some earthlie thing, as loue of needlesse delectation, or affection to some person or busines not rightly ordered. Wherefore he that feeleth him selfe so dull, must search out diligently in himselfe, such defect or affection, and take it away by contrary actes, as we taught before,

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fore, and shall more hereafter.

For to incline our will to produce actes of the loue of God, aboue all thinges, without hauing first gotten the holy hatred of our selues, or whiles our affection to any earthly thinge that may delight vs endureth (not beinge ordeyned or referred either actually or virtually to God) is much like as if a man woulde cut with a hammer, thinges requiring a railour or sharpe knife. For the perfection and excellencie of this loue (the least acte whereof, may aduance a man to a high degree of eternall glory in heauen) doth not permit with it,
any

any such vile and base thing. Besides this also the seruant of God, must be warie of the assaultes of his mortal enemy the deuill, who neuer ceaseth to molest and hinder them that go forward in any vertue, but moste maliciously goeth about to harne and overthrow them, that endeouour to obteyne, this most holy loue of God.

What way I pray you, said Probus, can he cheefly hinder vs?

Among many other, said Alphonso, he hindreth vs by one, which is very secret, & yet much dangerous and hurtfull, that is, by a certaine meane estimation,

contempt, negligence, and coldnes of the minde, towardes the worke of the loue of God, which some persons haue, whiles they thinke, heare, or reade, the cheife point of it to consist, in the desire of Gods perfections, goodnes, & glorie, and in ioying in them as I said before.

How can this, said Probus, happen to any man in this holy worke?

It hapneth, said Alphonso, because they litle cōceiue or marke the worthines of this thing, and the enemy doth assaile and trouble them wi hall: And principally it chanceth to them that are
not

not preuented with the sweetnes
which this loue is accustomed to
bringe with it.

For they hearing as I said euen
now this loue to consist in this,
that we desire and inwardly feele
in our selues, a complacency and
ioy, for all the infinite goodnes
and glory which is in God, and
this onely for God, they waxe
colde, thinking this worke not
to be so high and excellent as it
is, but iudge other works as well
corporall as spirituall, to exceede
this, and to be more becomminge
Gods seruants, as preaching, dis-
puting, gouerning others, feigh-
ting for the faith, almes deedes,
fasting,

fasting, afflictions, and the like.

Wherupon, said Probus, com-
meth this false conceipt of theirs?

It commeth, said Alphonso,
first by reason the deuil tempteth
them; and withall, the taste and
appetite of their soule, is distem-
pered and corrupted, as I toulde
you yester night, in the fourth in-
struction. by the example of the
sick man, that by reason of his in-
fected tast, desireth hurtfull mea-
tes, & taketh loath with whole-
some.

What remedie haue we against
this noysome impediment, said
Probus?

We must prouide first, said
Al-

Alphonso, that our corrupt appetite be cured, as I saide in the fourth instruction: which done, they that feele this coldnes, and haue this wrong estimation, shall incontinent perceiue, all other workes, how worthy and meruelous soeuer they seeme, to be verie abiect and base, in respect of this loue, as S. Paul teacheth vs. 1. Cor. 13. And our Sauour himselfe, being the eternall wisdom of God (which can not erre or deceiue vs) hath chosen & commaunded the same aboue al thinges which may be done in heauen or earth. A reason hereof you may haue alio, if you consider

der that albeit our free will and the acte thereof (which I tould you before in the fourth instruction, to be of greatest dignitie in vs) be of themselves, litle worth or of small commoditie: Yet may we make the of inestimable dignitie and valew, if we vnite our will and most strongly fasten it, to the will of God, which is of an infinite excellēcy, in such manner ioyning ours vnto his, that it be not carried to any other thing, but what his blessed wil desireth. For then the acte and desire of our infirme and base free will, groweth to be of infinite valewe and dignitie, when (forsakinge
OUR

our selues) we take the desire of that infinite will which is God, who incessantly willet, loueth, and ioyeth, for the infinite good and worthines he hath.

Why requireth God, saide Probus, that we shoulde desire loue and ioye in that sort, as he euer doth?

He would haue vs doe it, said Alphonsio, first for that his loue and goodnes to vs, would haue our abiect free will, aduaunced to so great nobilitie and honour, as to haue an acte of infinite and diuine valew. Againe, because (seing he hath created vs to so great a good as to enioy him self)

it

it is iust that we yelde him this seruice at least, as to occupie our selues all the time of our mortall life, in louing him and ioying for his good and glorie, as we see faithfull seruantes and louinge, exceedingly to reioyce, for the goods and honour their Lords get. Thirdly, that here on earth we may occupy our selues, as being that worke wherein our eternall glory & beatitude in heauen. cheiflye must consist. For Gods holy Sainctes, clearly behoulding his nature and essence, are replenished with an infinite knowledge to iudge what goodnes & glory his Maiestie is worthy

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thy of: and also with an infinite desire and loue, that he possesse the same. Which burning desire and loue of theirs, when (beholding God) they see it fulfilled in more perfect sorte then they can wish, imagine, or comprehend, they are raiſed with vnſpeakable ioyes and gladnes.

The happy S^{an}ctes in heauen, haue the manifeſt viſion and perfect fruition of all his goodnes, and therefore their knowledge, loue, and ioy, is perfect. We ſinful wormes on earth by the light of our Catholicke faith (though obſcurely, yet moſt certainly and ſtimely) beleeue the ſame, which
they

they behould. And therefore God will, that we occupy our powers as much as we can, in the same loue, desire and ioy, of the infinite goodnes and glory of our Lord. For the more we loue him, and ioy in his goodnes here on earth, the more perfect and greater, shal our loue and ioyes be in heauen.

I conceiue all this said Probus, but many without doubt, haue obteyned the perfect loue of God required in this life, without all this adoe, or knowledge of this way you haue taught me.

Many haue indeede, said Alphonso, loued God perfectly, before this way was either knowne
to

to me, or taught in this manner,
by any that I haue heard: but
surely the ordinary way to get it,
hath bene this in substance. For
it is gathered out of the holy
Scriptures, according to the de-
claration of the holy Doctours,
which haue writē of this matter.

Many haue thought & thinke
still, that they haue gotten it very
easely without these reasons and
meanes, but comonly they fay-
led of it, and got but the weake
and imperfect loue which I spake
of before.

If you thinke good, we will
now passe to the loue of our
neighbours.

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Doe

Doe so I pray you, said Probus.

Of the loue of our Neighbours.

AS the loue of God, said Alphonso, required before it, all the exercises and considerations we spake of: so the loue of our neighbour and of our selues, required before them the loue of God. For it is necessary that these two loues proceed from the loue of God, otherwise they can not be good, or well ordered. You must know then that he which desireth to serue and please God, must marke and obserue two things. The first is, what God
would

Loue of our Neighbour. 259

would haue him to doe: The seconde, in what manner he would haue it done. For he should haue small thanke, or rewarde with God, that should doe his commaundement, if he did it not in the manner he commaunded it. He hath bidden vs to loue one an other saying. *This is my precept, that you loue one an other:* and with this, in what sorte also we should doe it saying, *as I haue loued you.* He then that dooth the first, shall not haue the high reward due to that loue, except also he doe the seconde.

Now therefore to know how we ought one to loue an other,

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we must consider how our Lord
loued vs.

First by many waies and meanes, he drew and induced vs to the loue of God: Then he taught vs by his owne example, to suffer patiently, all the aduersities of this world, neuer slackening the raynes to vaine delights, aboue that which might be necessary to the sustentatiō of his body. Then he dyed for vs, that we might haue thereby vertues, grace, and glory. In this kinde of loue he meruelously exceeded, and was a most vehemente enemy to all vaine loue which now passeth among vs, and is ordinarily very corrupt

Loue of our Neighbour. 261

corrupt & infectious to our soules, created to be the temples of God. According to this example therfore of our Lord, we ought to frame our Loue towards our neighbours, casting away all vanities, which are accustomed to mixe them selues with our loue, as to be much affected to some persons, for that we see them vertuous and deuout, and in their conuersation, to be milde, gracious, and amiable: In the loue of whom often good menns hartes, are taken captiue, findinge greife, disquietnes and trouble of minde, to be without them, or not to talke with them, or not

to be mutually beloued & esteemed of them: All which kinde of affection & loue is vaine & hurtfull to the seruantes of God.

Methinke, said Probus, we might well loue others in this sorte, because we see them Gods seruants, cheifly if we doe it for God.

If your frend, said Alphonso, had a seruant, the loue of whom, shoulde so hould captiue your hart, and so greatly increase, that it more delighted you, to conuerse and talke with him, then with your frends: were it not manifest that now you loue not the seruant for your frende, but because

Loue of our Neighbour. 263

cause his conuersation & nature
is sweete and gratefull to you?
For though your loue towardes
that seruant, began for your fren-
des sake, yet now it is become in-
ordinate and excessive, and more
for your owne pleasure and de-
light you take in the seruāt, then
wholly for respect of your friend:
Euen thus we may speake of that
loue you rehearsed. It is plaine
mockerie to say it is loue of our
neighbour purely for God, not-
withstandinge there be perhaps
some part of spirituall loue there-
with. But he that is truly and
wholly addicted to God, taketh
noe parte from him, but geueth

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him

him al, occupying and bestowing his whole affection on him, or in some thinge, that is wholly ordered or directed to him, as such vaine loue cannot be, being more for some thing in a creature, then for God.

Our loue should be towardes all the seruants of our Father, as well our enemies as frends, with so great affection as may proceed, from the loue we haue to him, that all other affections set aside, only that may haue place which we owe vnto God.

To auoide and cast of al which superfluous affectiōs, those thinges may helpe, which I tould
you

Loue of our Neighbour. 265

you of before speaking of the naturall affection of ioy, and of the vse of our will.

How then, said Probus, should we loue our neighbours?

Our loue to them, said Alphonso, should springe altogether from the loue of God, that (consideringe they are so highly beloued of him, that he would yeld him selfe to death for them whē yet they were his enemies) we should loue them al so much, as to help them in all that is good and needfull for their bodies and soules, like as we are wōt lo loue thē that much delight vs. Yea & this we should do, though their
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conuerſation were moleſtful and odious vnto vs, entreating them curteouſly, and prouidinge for their neceſſities, as for the which are tenderly beloued of our heauenly Lord and Father, who wil- leth and commaundeth vs ſo to do. All this we ought to do, with as ſeruent a will as we can, for gratifying, pleaſing, and obeying our Lord, how iniurious & noy- ſome ſoeuer they be vnto vs.

It is very harde, ſaid Probus, for to beare ſuch tender affection to our enemies, as we may doe to our friends and benefactors.

Our corrupt natures, ſaid Alphonſo, finde difficultie to loue
our

Loue of our Neighbour. 267

our enemies, but the children of God must not measure nor order their actions, by the inclination and motions of their corrupt affections, but by the rule of Gods holy will and commaundement. And a resolute will of seruinge God, maketh them no lesse firme & constant in louing him, whom their owne inordinate affections would hate, then him whom by the aboundance of benefites and good turnes, they are inclined to loue.

Yet with all this you must know, that albeit our loue ought to be in this sort equally to eue-ry one, yet ought we first to shew
it

it in good effects and benefites, towards them that are vertuous, & them we are behouldinge vnto. For Gods will is, that our charity be orderly disposed, preferringe in these good benefites, euery one, accordinge as we are diuersly bound vnto them.

God hath also, saide Probus, commaunded vs to loue our neighbours, as we loue our selues, which is no other manner of louing them, then as our Sauiour loued vs.

He hath commaunded so indeede, said Alphonso, but this manner and the other, are all one in effect and substance if they be
rightly

Loue of our Neighbor. 269

rightly vnderstood. For the loue which we should haue to our selues, ought to be the same, and in the same manner, as our Sauiour loued vs. We will therfore if it please you, go forward, and declare in what sorte we are to loue our selues.

Doe so I pray you, said Probus, for it cā not but be a pleasant hearinge, and without all perill of offending any, euery one beinge desirous to loue him self as much as may be.

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Of the loue of our selues.

OVr naturall inclination, said Alphonso, to the loue of our selues, is so great and vehement, that God hath not geuen vs any commaundement therof, yet by the blindnes and corruption of sinne, we haue in most part lost our iudgment & knowledge, how we ought to do it.

He therefore that would truly loue him self, must obserue three things.

First that by al meanes he procure any thing wherby he knoweth any good may come to him selfe.

selfe.

Secondly that he flee and auoyde, whatsoeuer may bringe him damage or euill.

Thirdly that he refuse not to offer and yelde him selfe to any difficulties, for obteyninge his owne good.

Our naturall reason and the light of our Catholicke faith, sufficiently teach vs, which be true goods and euills, and which be apparent and deceitfull. And we must be very circumspect and diligent that we erre not, in discerning these, or folow not the vnreasonable inclinations and appetites of our owne sensualitie, taking

taking that for good, which indeede is hurtfull, or fleeing that as euill, which in truth is our good.

Now he that woulde enrich him selfe with good things, must know, that in euery good he desireth, or may obteyne, two thinges are to be considered. One is, the good that may come to him selfe, by that thing. The other is, that it is Gods will and desire, that he haue that thing. Of these two he ought litle or noe whitt, to esteeme the benefite or good that may happen to him selfe of the thing he desireth or doth as it is his owne: In respect of the seconde,

conde that it is the seruice of God, and the fulfilling of his holie wil, as I tould you before in the fifth instruction, speaking of the end of all our actions and desires.

Our Lord hath geuen vs a precious ornament or Iewel, wherewith we may exceedingly enrich our selues at any time, that is our appetite and will, the which we (as it were) gilde with coper or tinne, when we desire and loue any thing for our owne good & benefite: And againe, we adorne & bewaify it with diuine gould, when (forgeting our selues) we desire and loue any good thing,

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only

only for pleasing and seruing our Lord, and fulfilling his will. For the more we forget our selues, and haue care of Gods honour and glorie, the more care hath God ouer vs againe to enriche vs with all goodnes. Wherefore, he that spiritually loueth him selfe, must euer (as worldly men doe) study how to make better, all his goods and substance, when he knoweth the way how it may easily be done. What more is to be said of this point, I refer you to our conference of the hatred of our selues.

For the seconde also, which is the fleeing of all euill, I neede to say

say no more, but he that truly loueth him self must esteeme nothing euill or hurtfull to him, & so flee it, but only sinne and the occasions thereof.

Now for the third, which is to offer him selfe to any difficultie or daungers forgetting his own good, I must admonish him diligently to exercise him self in the things that I haue said before, but principally, in the hatred of him selfe, in humilitie, in patience, and in the foure naturall affections or passions of his soule.

Is there then no more necessarie, said Probus, for obteyninge this true loue of our selues?

One thing more, said Alphonso, is to be obserued and practised diligently, and that is. It hapneth dailie, that we doe or say something, otherwile then we should haue done or becometh vs, for which they that see or heare (knowing our defect or imperfection) may thinke the worse of vs, and the lesse esteeme vs. In which case we must consider, first the confusion that followeth vs therby. In this cōfusion we must not comfort or animate our selues, in thinking that others perhaps regarded not what we did or said, or that perhaps they haue forgotten it, or that it should not trouble

trouble vs, because other men fall often into the like defects: This I say we should not doe, but with great loue embrace that confusion, and thinke that others marked vs very well, and account worse of vs, and worthily contēne vs as vnprofitable, and vnperfect men. For in doing thus, we make a vehement act of patience and humilitie, & shortly produce, most excellent habits of them, and finally, doe great seruice to God, if we referr it to him.

The other thing we are to cōsider in such cases, is the euil example we geue therby, and the

dishonour or lesse glory to God. For this therefore the seruant of God, must produce an act of sorrow, that he hath bene by that speech or fact, perhaps some occasion of euill, or lesse seruiceable to his Lord, then he might or should haue bene, and thus shall he reape commodity both on the one, and the other.

This is all I haue to say of the loue of our selues, vnlesse you be vnsatisfied in some thing else.

I am very well satisfied in all you haue spoken, said Probus, & I verely thinke, that whosoever would frame him selfe to serue God in this sort you haue tolde
me,

me, should not only increase exceedingly his owne merit & glory in heauen, but moreouer leade a most ioyfull and sweete life in earth.

He should noe doubt finde much comfort, ioye, and sweetnes, said Alphonso, seruing God in this sorte, but he must beware, he rest not in this sweetnes, nor serue God for it, because God geueth it not for that ende, but that by it we may come to take delight and ioye, in the considerations of that good, glory & dominion, which God possesseth, and that with great courage, we laude and praise him.

S 4

What

What is our praising of God,
said Probus?

Al praise of God, said Alphon-
so, is none other thing in vs, then
a ioye that we haue, to manifest
and make knowne to all persons,
the wonderfull workes & inesti-
mable goodnes of our Lord, in
whom his seruants ought to de-
light and ioye, as worldly men
doe, when they heare their deare
frendes, or them selues praised.

Now let vs end, with thanks
geuing to God for his giftes and
goodnes.

Tell me this also, said Probus,
how shall I geue thanks to God?

of

Of Thankesgiuing.

THankesgiuing to God, said
Alphonso, is nothinge els
but an internall acte of the soule,
wherby he that hath receiued a
gift or benefite from God, first
recogniseth him to be an infinite
God & Lord, from whom flow-
eth all good in heauen and earth,
and then ioyeth, not because he
is more enriched thereby, but for
the glory and goodnes of his
Lord, and for that he seeth him
selfe by that gifte, more enabled
to loue and serue him.

Is there nothing besides this,
said

saied Probus, necessary in yelding
thankes to God?

Besides these actes of our vn-
derstanding & will, saied Alphon-
so, Gods seruant ought vpon re-
ceipt of any benefite, to offer vnto
God all he is, abasinge and anni-
hilatinge him selfe in his owne
concept and will, that so he may
wholly in body and soule, be de-
uoted vnto Gods seruice, produ-
cinge at that time great actes of
ioy, for the infinite power and
goodnes of God, from which
that benefite came. For he that
woulde be accounted gratefull,
ought to requite his benefactor
with an other thinge of as great
or

or greater valew and worth, then that was, which he receiued of him before.

And seing we haue receiued of God all we haue, whatsoeuer we yelde to his seruice, is very small to requite, euen, the least of his benefites. We ought therefore at the least, to render him thanks for them, in the manner I haue said, and this with as much loue and force, as possibly we may.

And not only to doe this, for the benefites bestowed on our selues, but also for the giftes and graces geuen to all his Saints, to our frendes, to our enemies, and all his creatures in heauen and earth.

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earth. For in so doing, we make
(in a straung and meruelous sort)
the goods of all Gods creatures,
our owne, and without regard of
our owne commoditie, we ex-
ceedingly increase the same.

Now is it time, you were tra-
neling, I wil bring you into your
way againe.

I thanke you Father said Pro-
bus. And being come to the way,
they embraced eche other and
departed, Alphonso to his solita-
rie cell, and Probus, toward le-
rusalem.

Deo gratias.

FINIS.

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